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ERNEST RENAN: THE MAN AND HIS WORK

In the Preface to his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine,* written on October 6, 1845, John Henry Newman said that after long years of prayer and study he had finally come to see the miracle of the Church: its living link with the Church of the Fathers and the Church of Christ.

On that same day, October 6, 1845, another important drama of faith was enacted. For on this day, Ernest Renan, a seminarian of the age of twenty-two, walked across the courtyard of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice and entered the house which was used as a stopping-off place for those who were leaving the Parisian Seminary.

This was not an ordinary loss of vocation, however, for the young Renan had taken off his cassock because he had ceased to believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ and in the supernatural nature and mission of the Catholic Church.

We have chosen Renan as the subject of this paper for the following reason: in a single book, *Vie de Jésus,* published in 1863, he gave to the French world and through translations to a much wider audience, the result of the whole process of German biblical criticism of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. On many fundamental points he differed from the German critics, yet he was their heir and their popularizer. "Renan's art," says Father Lagrange, "stripped exegesis of the heavy garments with which the climate of Germany had smothered it and robed it in a white tunic from the East."[1] Although Father Lagrange recognizes Renan's clever use of the pen, he stigmatizes the book as a morally ugly work[2] and Albert Schweitzer, in his *Quest for the Historical Jesus,* and other Protestant writers with him have said that Renan's book is a work lacking in sincerity and moral sense.[3]

In the world of the critic then, the book was not too important. Nevertheless, it was extremely popular. One year after its publica-

[1] M. J. Lagrange, O.P., *Renan and Christ,* translated by Maisie Ward (London: Sheed and Ward, 1928), p. 1.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 51.

[3] Translated by W. Montgomery (London: A.&C. Black, 1911), pp. 190-191.

tion it had been translated into eleven languages and by 1920 it had reached its fifty-second edition.[4] Renan's influence is still being felt, for his sentimental, undogmatic Christ is being repainted in our own day by popular writers like Norman Vincent Peale and Lloyd Douglas of *Magnificent Obsession, The Robe* and *Big Fisherman* fame.

THE MAN AND HIS LOSS OF FAITH

Renan's youth was lived in a very Catholic atmosphere, filled with legends of the local Breton Saints. In his later years Renan looked back with nostalgia to this dream period of faith.[5] At the age of twelve he entered the seminary. After the ordinary preparatory studies he passed from the course of Rhetoric, "form without thought," as he called it, to the study of a very unsatisfactory rationalistic type of philosophy in which, he complained, the great body of the thought of his time reached him in the feeble *solvuntur objectiones* at the end of every class-period. Passing on to his theological studies he found that reason held first place there too, for his professors claimed that reason *proves* the revelation, the divinity of the Scriptures and the authority of the Church. Renan said that the only instance since the extinction of Jansenism in which St. Sulpice was moved to anger was when M. de Lammenais declared that the starting point of theology should be faith, and not reason.[6]

In this educational atmosphere Renan came into contact with the German exegesis and this contact more than anything else influenced his loss of faith for it destroyed his belief in the supernatural. "If miracles have taken place," he said, "I am a liar and my book is a tissue of falsehoods."[7] Miracles were, then, an absolute impossibility. He claimed, however, that this judgment is not an *a priori* principle because *de facto* no one has ever proved that a miracle has taken place in the real world. He would, perhaps, admit a miracle if the following conditions were fulfilled:

[4] Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 2. For another account of the book's popularity, see *Recollections of My Youth*, translated by C. B. Pitman (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1929), p. xi.

[5] *Recollections*, pp. 1-45; 345.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

[7] *Vie de Jésus* (13th ed.; Paris: Lévy Frères, 1883), pp. v; xciv; xcvii; 464-468. See also *The Apostles* (London: Mathieson & Co., 1895), p. 53; *The Gospels* (London: Mathieson & Co., 1895), pp. 209-210.

> Let a thaumaturgist present himself with testimony sufficiently important to merit our attention; let him announce that he is able to raise a man from the dead; what would we do? We would appoint a commission composed of physiologists, physicians, chemists and critical historians. This commission would choose the corpse, make certain that death was real, designate the hall in which the experiment was to take place, and regulate the whole system of precautions so that there could be no room for doubt. If under such conditions the resurrection should be performed, an almost certain probability would result.[8]

Even then Renan would not be satisfied: "The thaumaturgist would be invited to repeat his marvellous act under other circumstances, upon other bodies, in another medium."[9] Since a miracle has never taken place under these conditions, Renan claimed that he was justified in his disbelief in miracles.

In addition to the German criticism, Renan gives other more specific reasons for his loss of faith: the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament do not refer to Christ;[10] there are mistakes in the Gospels, Luke's claiming that Christ was born during the governorship of Quirinus, for example;[11] the Church has erred in determining the authors of certain books of the Old Testament, the *Book of Daniel* in particular;[12] historical criticism shows that there is no continuity in the development of dogma, there is no living link between the Church of today and the teaching of Jesus Christ;[13] and finally, only knowledge which meets the requirements of the knowledge of the physical science is valid knowledge.[14]

Renan did not give up his faith without a struggle. He frequently and sincerely mentioned his doubts about faith to his spiritual advisors, but they told him to forget about them since they would disappear with time. The young seminarian tried to forget these doubts but was unable to do so, and the doubts finally destroyed his faith. He said that his emancipation from dogma and his abandoning of the Church to become a true disciple of Christ cost him

[8] *Vie,* p. xcvii; *Recollections,* pp. 247-248.
[9] *Vie, loc. cit.*
[10] *Rec.,* p. 283.
[11] *Vie,* p. lxxxiv, footnote 5.
[12] *Rec.,* pp. 256; 263.
[13] *Rec.,* pp. 248; 263; *Apostles,* pp. 46; 65; 71. *Gospels,* pp. v-vi; 172-173.
[14] *Rec.,* p. 218. For the philosophical basis of this position, see James Collins, *God in Modern Philosophy* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1959), pp. 183-195.

six long years of suffering: "Only one who has studied and suffered as much as I have has the right not to believe in Christianity." He always felt a resentment toward those who, in an instant, without much study, renounce the Church; he resented their "attaining the truth" so easily whereas he had to struggle to attain it.[15]

Father Levie, in his book *Sous Les Yeux De L'Incroyant,* manifests sincere sympathy for the young Renan, struggling to reconcile faith and reason. He admires his affection for his teachers, his capacity for work, his desire to know, and he intimates that with proper direction, instead of the somewhat Jansenistic direction he had received, Renan might have been able to reconcile the demands of his reason with the claims which faith makes.[16]

But for the Renan of old age, the Renan of the *Vie de Jésus,* self-satisfied, skeptical, morally insincere, Levie has no respect: "It is strange that an effort of moral sincerity at twenty had as its effect the progressive debasement of the moral level of his soul."[17]

Renan claimed, in his own humble way, that he, of all men, was best qualified to write a life of Jesus because to write a really objective life of Jesus the author must have believed and then have ceased to believe. Only then could the author be objective. The man who looks at the sources objectively will have to accept shocking statements about Christ: that at one period of His life He resorted to fraud, that at another period He was afflicted with a certain kind of madness. Only the impartial historian, the critic not bound by the chains of dogma will be able to make those statements.[18] The Catholic theologian, says Renan, is like a bird locked in a cage, the cage of faith; the Liberal Protestant, with his minimum of dogma, is outside the cage, but his wing is cut, consequently he cannot fly. Only Renan is outside the cage with a good pair of wings; only Renan is free to fly, only he can be truly objective.[19]

HIS USE OF THE GOSPELS

In order to write his *Vie de Jésus* Renan had to use the Gospels. He explains his use of these documents in a long introduction to

[15] *Rec.,* p. 124.
[16] (2nd ed.; Paris: Desclée, 1946), pp. 58-61.
[17] *Ibid.,* pp. 62-64.
[18] *Vie,* p. civ.
[19] *Ibid.,* pp. ix-x.

this work and in a separate book entitled *The Gospels.*[20] For our present purpose the following information is of importance. Mark's gospel is the most historical; Matthew's is the best for the discourses of Christ; from an historical point of view Luke has little value since he is a mere harmonizer; from an artistic point of view, however, Luke's gospel is the most perfect. Luke's Christ, who speaks words of forgiveness, of praise for poverty, of tenderness towards women, especially warms the heart of the sentimental Renan.[21]

In contrast to the German critics who denied the validity of John's gospel, Renan claimed that an author must use it if he wants to give a true picture of Jesus. The gospel, however, cannot be accepted *in toto* since John had an ulterior motive in writing it. John was not satisfied with the way the Synoptic writers had depicted the younger son of Zebedee, so he wrote his own gospel to show his own prominent place in the preaching of the Word and his intimate connection with the Master.[22]

In using John's gospel, Renan makes an important distinction between the discourses and the narratives. The discourses of this gospel are unhistoric; Christ could not possibly have spoken them. There are exceptions, however, when Renan wants to make them. For example: the discourse of Christ with the woman at the well of Jacob is unhistoric except for the words "But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Renan defends the historicity of these words because they support his claim that Christ established a *pure* religion, a religion of the heart without any external cult.[23]

On the other hand, the narratives of John's gospel, especially the narratives of the last week of Christ's life, *are* important; they are even more important than the Synoptic accounts of Christ's last days. Why does the author make this important distinction? For two reasons: the Agony in the Garden and the Institution of the Eucharist are not mentioned in John. If these events had taken

[20] *Vie,* xlvii-xcv. See note 7.

[21] *Gospels,* pp. 147-148; 224-226.

[22] *Ibid.,* pp. 221-222. *Vie,* pp. lxi-lxxx; 162-163; 166; 477-541.

[23] The establishment of a "pure" religion is one of Renan's constantly recurring themes. *Rec.,* pp. 272-273. *Vie,* pp. 48; 79; 89-90; 93; 107; 169; 232-233; 244; 294; 296; 342-344; 456; 463. *Apostles,* pp. xxxii; 204.

place as related in the Synoptic accounts, it would mean that Christ knew when He would die. But this foreknowledge would smack of the supernatural which Renan wants to avoid at all costs. Consequently, John must give the true account of Christ's last night while, on the other hand, the evidence of the three Synoptics is due to the prejudices of the authors of these gospels.[24]

In addition to these four gospels, sources common to any author of a Life of Christ, Renan has his own personal source which gives him the clue to the understanding of the Scriptures. This personal source he calls "The Fifth Gospel": the memory of what he had seen and understood during his own personal stay in the Holy Land. According to Renan, you cannot understand Christ until you have seen the beautiful blue sky over Nazareth or until you have breathed the perfume of the Galilean hills; nor can you understand Christ's popularity until you have realized that the Oriental at times respects the madman and the fool; nor can you understand the change which took place in Christ's character, from the meek moral teacher of Galilee to the fanatic of the last days at Jerusalem, until you have seen the geographical contrast between the green meadows of Galilee and the barren harshness of the Judean landscape.[25]

THE FIRST PERIOD: CHRIST THE MORAL TEACHER

Against this background then, Renan begins his *Vie de Jésus*. Renan says that we know few certain historical facts about Christ; for the rest we must "divine the meaning behind the facts"; "we must make delicate approximations"; "we must conjecture."[26]

"Who is Christ?" according to the author of this famous work.

Christ is a superior man. He was born at Nazareth. The Bethlehem story grew up when his followers realized that the Messiah should have been born there. Christ came from a large family of which He was the eldest son. He had sisters who married and lived at Nazareth; His brothers did not get along with Him; His cousins did. Christ was simple and somewhat ignorant; He, therefore, believed in devils and the supernatural and He lived in a dream-world of the miraculous. Living in a dream-world would have a bad effect on most people—it would lead to deception and malicious

[24] *Vie*, pp. 398-403.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. xcix.
[26] *Vie*, pp. v, xvii, c.

fraud. Fortunately this dream-life did not have a bad effect on Christ. Rather, it gave Him a deep idea of the familiar relations of God with man, and this idea made Him into a great moral teacher. The first picture of Christ is, then, Christ the preacher of moral aphorisms. The highlight of this first period is the Sermon on the Mount—the most beautiful body of moral teaching the world has ever seen, according to Renan. Not only is it beautiful, says the author, but it is true because it can pass to sentiment, it can warm the heart of man.[27]

Here, then, is Renan's ideal Christ: Christ the Moral Teacher establishing a pure religion, a religion resting on feelings of the heart, a religion violently opposed to priesthood, cult, dogma, external asceticism, and canon law.

This was the Ideal in its pure form. Unfortunately, the Ideal and the Pure of themselves do not succeed in the real world. To succeed they must be mixed with what is less Ideal, less Pure.[28] The first of these stains on the ideal Christ was His contact with John the Baptist. From this encounter, Christ picked up the unfortunate rite of Baptism, a rite which He would have preferred to jettison but which He kept because of the prestige of John the Baptist.[29]

Despite this stain, however, the first period of Christ's life was one of great joy. The more people came to believe in Him, the more He came to believe in Himself. Renan pictures Christ as a smiling Boy Scout Leader escorting His happy band of troopers on a "joyous holiday through the earthly paradise of Galilee." He quieted objections with a smile, His speech was like perfume, bands of happy children accompanied Him wherever He went; women washed His feet; the poor loved Him because He taught that the rich could not be saved.[30] At no time is Renan more maudlin than when he describes the mule on which Christ rode: "He traversed Galilee in a perpetual holiday. He rode upon a mule, an animal in the East so sure and good, whose large black eye, shaded with long lashes, is full of gentleness."[31]

[27] *Vie*, pp. 20-245.
[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 96; 267.
[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 98; 111; 119.
[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 144-202. *Apostles*, pp. 18-20.
[31] *Vie*, p. 197.

One day this happy band of troopers accompanied Him to the desert and they lived so frugally while they were there that they thought they saw a miracle: "One is not hungry when he is with the Master," they said to one another. In this way Renan explains the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves.[32]

THE SECOND PERIOD: CHRIST THE WONDER-WORKER

This band of happy Galileans, however, were not able to make any impression on Jerusalem, the stronghold of priesthood, ritualism, and canon law; elements so foreign to Christ's religion of the heart.[33] Christ, therefore, had to change His tactics. So He tacitly agreed to fraud because without it He had no hope of success: "Either become a wonder-worker or renounce his mission." This adoption of fraud begins the second period of Christ's life.

Let us not, however, judge this action of fraud by present standards, Renan tells us, because, despite the fraud, His doctrine still warms the hearts of men: "To the vulgar auditor, the miracle proves the doctrine; to us, the doctrine makes us forget the miracles."[34] Christ *had* to become a wonder-worker because all great foundations rest on legend and every idea loses something of its purity when it aspires to realization. Blame neither Christ nor His Apostles for this fraud because they were in a state of "poetic ignorance."

In what did this innocent fraud of Christ consist? He consented to the title "Son of David."[35] He used techniques associated with wonder-workers; for example, he groaned when He effected certain cures. Finally, He allowed to be attributed to a supernatural cause what He knew He did naturally. The mere pleasure of seeing Christ cured the sick person: "He gives what he can: a smile, a hope and that is not unavailing." The very sound of His voice was able to cure lunatics.

It is true, says Renan, that what we would now consider illusion and hallucination played a large part in Christ's life, yet we must not allow these faults to destroy the sublime aspect of His life.

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 205-207; 498-500.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 228.
[34] *Apostles*, p. 85.
[35] *Vie*, pp. 136-137; 246-247.

Christ the moral teacher overcomes Christ the magic-worker. It is true that Christ was a "charmer" but we should not call Him a fraud, since his miracles were a violence done to Him by His time; a concession to popular prejudice which He was forced to make.[36]

Renan's "Cure by Smile" theory explains most of Christ's healing miracles but there are three miracles which he explains in another way.

The cure of the lame man at the Probatic Pool causes Renan difficulty, since it was performed in incredulous Jerusalem while the rest of Christ's miracles were worked on the ignorant, superstitious Galileans. Renan says that he will explain this miracle later on in his book,[37] but he never does explain it. The resurrection of Lazarus also causes him some difficulty; he explains this miracle when he discusses the third period of Christ's life.

How does he explain the miracle of the Eucharist? We have already seen that, according to Renan, the Holy Eucharist was not instituted during the Last Supper because John does not mention it. The Eucharist is, then, merely a glorified form of a normal act of Christ; an act which had taken place many times before. In other words, the Synoptic writers wanted to make the last night of Christ's life important, so they transferred a normal event to this last night and surrounded it with mystery:

> Breaking of bread at table was probably one of his habits and it is probable that at such moments he was very tender and lovely. Meals in the infant community were charming occasions. Jesus loved these community meals and took pleasure in seeing his spiritual family thus grouped around him. Participation in the same bread was considered a sort of communion, a reciprocal bond. As he broke bread, the Master used extremely energetic terms in this respect, which at a later day were understood with unbridled literalness.[38]

The very fact that Christ could use such *energetic* words when referring to the bread was due to the fact that He had a confused idea of what constituted individuality: "I am in the Father and the Father is in me"; "Whoever receives you, receives me"; "This is

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 265-280.

[37] *Vie*, p. 496. Nor does Renan discuss the cure of the man born blind in the ninth chapter of St. John.

[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 315-316.

my body; this is my blood," all show that Christ's knowledge of psychology was faulty.[39]

Therefore, the placing of the institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper is due to the prejudice of the first three evangelists; the words used by Christ are due to His ignorance.

THE THIRD PERIOD: CHRIST THE MADMAN

Renan calls the last period of Christ's life "the period of exaltation." "Exaltation," in Renan's use of the word, means "madness."

The opposition which Christ met from the priests, the struggle of the Ideal with the Real was too much for Him. Christ became filled with sadness and with a bitter disgust for the world; He began to trample under His feet all that is human: kindred, love, country; He manifested signs of madness; He approved those who mutilated themselves for the glory of God, He gave stern warnings to His Apostles as He sent them on a missionary journey, He talked of violent persecutions and of hatred toward one's mother and father. At this point of His life gentleness left Him (He looked with anger at the Pharisees) and He became uncouth. Why, then, can we still love this fanatic Christ? Renan tells us that as we forgot the fraud of the second period, so we can forget the madness of the last days of His life when we consider His sweet saying: "Come all you who labor and are heavily burdened and I will refresh you." Think of the moral teacher of Galilee and His heart-warming doctrine and this madness becomes supportable. Christ's virtue did not give way but His struggle against the material in the name of the Ideal became insupportable, and death had to release Him from a condition strained to excess.[40]

Christ did, however, make one last attempt to win Jerusalem, but His effort was doomed to failure. A man of Christ's moral superiority, says Renan, could not cope with the canon lawyers of Jerusalem.[41]

In this impasse Christ's friends, with His tacit approval, of course, concoct a great and striking miracle; the resurrection of Lazarus. In his first edition of the *Vie de Jésus,* Renan says that the whole affair was a fake: Lazarus dressed himself in a shroud,

[39] *Ibid.,* pp. 254; 316-319.
[40] *Ibid.,* pp. 320-333.
[41] *Ibid.,* pp. 348-368.

went into the tomb and waited for Christ to call him.[42] In the thirteenth edition of his work, however, he backed down from this explanation by saying that all we can say is that "something happened," but the real significance of the event is its symbolizing Lazarus' spiritual rising from sin.[43]

With His back against the wall in this struggle with the priests of Jerusalem, Christ naturally asked Himself, "Was it worth it?" Renan goes on:

> Did he recall the clear fountains of Galilee where he might have refreshed himself, the young maidens who might have consented to love him? Did he weep that he had not remained an unknown artisan at Nazareth?[44]

In answer, the author says that Christ recalled the idea of His pure religion and its glorious first days, determined to continue, became Himself again, and went to meet His death.

The *Vie de Jésus* closes with Christ's death on the cross but some of Renan's most unique explanations of miracles occur in his later works. The Resurrection was caused by an understandable mistake. Two of Christ's followers stole His body from the tomb with the intention of telling the rest of the community after they had hidden the body. But while these two were hiding the dead Christ, Mary Magdalene saw the empty tomb and spread the rumor that Christ had risen. When the men returned to the community the rumor was accepted and they feared to tell the truth, so they kept eternally silent.[45]

Paul's conversion is explained by a serious case of sun-stroke and by his bad conscience about delivering women to prison.[46] But never does Renan appear more ridiculous than when he explains why the Apostles heard "Peace be with you" whenever they imagined that the risen Christ had appeared to them. The evening Oriental wind makes a strange sound as it blows through the

[42] Translated by Charles E. Wilbour (New York: Carleton, 1864), pp. 303-306.

[43] *Vie*, pp. 372-375; 508.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 391.

[45] *Apostles*, pp. 1-15. For the role of Mary Magdalene in the creation of the "myth" of the Resurrection, see *Vie*, pp. 449-450.

[46] *Apostles*, p. 97.

streets of Jerusalem (he had been in Jerusalem gathering his Fifth Gospel and had heard it)! As the wind blew through the room where the Apostles were gathered they thought they heard the sweet words of the Master, "Peace be with you."[47]

CRITIQUE

The very presentation of the contents of Renan's work constitutes its critique; nevertheless, we will briefly explicitate some of these criticisms and introduce a few from other sources.

1) *Lack of Objectivity:* Renan's most obvious fault is his lack of objectivity despite his unceasing claims to possess that gift. For instance: he changes the chronology of the events of Christ's life to fit his triple division of the life of Christ. Christ preached the Sermon on the Mount before He met John the Baptist (the period of the pure, non-ritualistic preaching had to come before his contact with John and the unfortunate rite of Baptism). Renan accepts the discourse between Christ and Pilate because of its beauty, but he rejects Christ's words from the cross about Our Lady because Christ had no personal tenderness; He existed only for humanity.[48] He does accept, however, what immediately follows the words about Our Lady because the soldier's giving Christ a drink shows man's basic humanity and tenderness.[49] The word "brother" can mean only one thing (because Christ must have brothers in the flesh), but "son" can have many meanings (because Christ in some way must be the son of God). But Renan's basic lack of objectivity and even sincerity is shown in his frequent use of the Fifth Gospel and in his frequent use of the expressions "they say" or "it seems" when he does not want to explain the incident. For example: Christ *seems* to have promised Peter the keys;[50] *it is said* that He drove the sellers from the Temple;[51] *some say* that angels administered to Him;[52] *it is said* that He spoke with Moses and Elias;[53] *He probably* did not say to Caiphas "You shall see the Son of Man coming. . . ."[54]

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[48] *Vie*, pp. 413; 436.
[49] *Ibid.*, pp. 439; 527.
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 165.
[51] *Ibid.*, p. 223.
[52] *Ibid.*, p. 118.
[53] *Ibid.*, p. 170.
[54] *Ibid.*, p. 410.

2) *Sentimentalism:* In addition to the sentimental pictures of the mule and the sweet pastoral of Galilee there are many other instances of his sentimentality. He can, for instance, believe ill of no man; the trial and abduction of Christ were completely legal;[55] Pilate has been maligned;[56] Judas' role is grossly exaggerated, probably John had a personal grudge against him;[57] and the soldiers who mocked Christ could not have been from cultured Rome, they were provincial barbarian riff-raff.[58]

There is a very good reason for this sentimentalism which was so much a part of Renan's character. There was a lack of masculine influence in his early life. He never mentions his father and he says that as a young boy he had no friends among the boys of his village. He frequently looks at things from a woman's point of view. For instance: four women will judge us in the Valley of Jehosaphat on the last day;[59] in the next life a handsome priest will be chastised by a woman he scorned;[60] chastity is the greatest compliment a man can pay to a woman because it is the recognition of her power;[61] religion is preserved in the world by the gentleness and kindness of women.[62]

3) *Pride:* Renan was not conspicuous for his humility: he claimed that he would have beaten Charles Darwin to his discoveries if he had kept up his biological studies instead of devoting his energies to critical history;[63] he refers to his "mind of trenchant steel" and he continually compliments himself on his penetrating critical faculty.[64] "I am the only man of my time who has understood the character of Jesus and St. Francis of Assisi," he said; he considered himself a martyr to the truth and he loved to contemplate and bask in the consideration of his Romanticism, his Idealism and his contempt for the world of commerce and for practical affairs.[65]

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 406.
[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 413-416; 420-426.
[57] *Ibid.*, p. 393.
[58] *Ibid.*, p. 420.
[59] *Rec.*, p. 317.
[60] *Ibid.*, p. 206.
[61] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[62] *Ibid.*, p. xxxvi.
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 228.
[64] *Ibid.*, pp. 264; 267; 279; 323.
[65] *Ibid.*, pp. 112; 113; 136.

4) *Lack of Interest in the Individual Man:* Although Renan claimed to be sincerely interested in humanity he does not seem to have been interested in the individual. He scorned the layman; he considered the man without a mission in life as scum;[66] throughout his life he avoided having any personal friends because he considered personal friendship a larceny against the world.[67] To his way of thinking, we should love humanity but not individual men.

5) *Indifferentism:* For him Christianity was one of many beautiful religions. He can wax as eloquent on the gods of the Parthenon as he can about the God of Christ.[68] Christianity is a natural religion; God is a vague spirit permeating the world;[69] Christ is a mere man; He is compared to Philo, Buddha, and Epictetus.[70] Although he admires the moral teaching of Christ, he claims that the religion of Christ was the natural consequence of what had preceded it in time.[71] Christ, the hero of this "historical novel," is difficult to admire even from a purely natural point of view: He was ignorant, naïve, deceitful; He was at various periods of His life a dreamer, a fraud and a fanatic, yet Renan tells us that the "infinite sweetness" of His personality, the "vague poetry" of His doctrine warm the heart and make us forget His faults and His concessions to the superstitious times in which He lived.

This, then, is the Christ known to the thousands who have read Renan's book during the last ninety-seven years.

CONCLUSION

Despite the obvious faults of Renan's *Vie de Jésus,* the book was extremely popular. Why? Because Renan was a clever writer. In the midst of what the Catholic reader would consider blasphemies, the author will introduce a tender saying of Christ, or he will paint a vivid picture of this simple, pure Galileean struggling against the coldness and hostility of his enemies and the unwary reader will forget the previous insults to Christ. Insincerity, perhaps, yet it might be well to recall the certainly sincere words which the young

[66] *Ibid.,* p. 135.
[67] *Ibid.,* pp. 319-321.
[68] *Ibid.,* pp. 49-64. *Apostles,* p. xxvi.
[69] *Rec.,* p. 325. Lagrange, *op. cit.,* p. 8.
[70] *Vie,* p. 37. *Gospels,* pp. 25; 198.
[71] *Vie.,* pp. 470-471.

seminarian struggling with doubts against the faith wrote to a friend who had just been ordained:

> I question whether there are any two human beings more incapable of understanding one another than a believer and a doubter, however complete may be their good faith and even their intelligence. They speak two unintelligible languages, unless the grace of God intervenes as an interpreter.[72]

Although we do speak languages unintelligible to each other, the writer hopes that he has been somewhat objective in his presentation of the life and work of Ernest Renan.

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[72] *Rec.*, p. 268.

SAINT AUGUSTINE'S USE OF SCRIPTURE

It is impossible to appreciate Augustine's technique of planning and delivering a sermon without alluding to the saint's use of his primary source book—the Bible. The Bible, from which Augustine once recoiled because of its apparent barbaric style and unintelligible meanings, became his most precious book, filled with words of "marvelous sublimity joined to the most wholesome simplicity."[1] It was written for our salvation, entrusted to the Church for its support and guidance, and given to authorized preachers to provide old things and new for the spiritual needs of the flock.[2]

Augustine judges the intellectual effectiveness of a sermon on the correct utilization of Sacred Scripture. "A man speaks more or less wisely in proportion as he makes more or less progress in Holy Scripture."[3] He was so convinced of this that shortly after his

[1] J. P. Christopher's translation of the paronomastic "altitudinis saluberrimam," *De Cat. Rud.* 8,12 (*PL* 40:319). Augustine put away his early distaste for the Bible: *Conf.* 3,5,9 (32:686); 6,5,8 (709); 7,20,26 (747); 7,21,27 (747); 9,5,13 (769); and became convinced that the Book is "a sound and substantial study; it does not allure the mind with embellished language, nor strike a flat or wavering note by means of any deceit of the tongue," *Epist.* 132,1 (33:508). It conquered Augustine as it conquered many others, "not by violence and warfare, but by the resistless force of truth," and he who attacks that truth injures none but himself. *C. Faust.* 22,60 (42:438); 22,83 (455); *Epist.* 138,4 (33:526). — — Unless indicated otherwise, numbering and references from Migne's *Patrologia Latina* (Paris, 1844-1864), vols. 32-47.

[2] The Scriptures are lamps lit in the night of this world for our guidance to the next world where they will be needed no longer. Cf. *Serm.* 23,3 (38:156); *In Joh.* 35,9 (35:1662). Maurice Pontet remarks that Augustine "always extolled the Bible as a book written to save men. He sees in it not so much a beautiful text as a powerful remedy, and he assures us that before charming us, it will heal us, *"L'exégèse de S. Augustin* (Paris: Aubier, 1946), p. 112. The Church, like a mother, feeds her children from her two breasts—the two Testaments, *In Epist. Joh.* 3,1 (35:1998); *De Mor. Ecc.* 1, 61-62 (32:1335-1336); *De Vera Rel.* 7, 12 (34:128). The Church is the custodian and interpreter of the Scripture: *Conf.* 7,7,11 (32:739); 13,29,44 (864), so that for Augustine, "I would not believe the Gospel unless the authority of the Church moved (commoverit) me thereto," *C. Manich.* 5,6 (42:176).

[3] *De Doc. Christ.* 4,5,7 (34:92). He adds, "I do not mean in the extensive reading and memorizing of them, but in a thorough understanding the careful searching into their meanings."

ordination, when Valerius insisted on making him preach, he writes the bishop:

> I ought to study carefully the remedies God has provided in His Scriptures. By prayer and reading I must gain the proper strength for my soul, that it may be prepared for this perilous task. For I was ordained just at the vacation time when I was planning how I could best learn the Sacred Scriptures. I was planning on some leisure to do this. Indeed, to tell the truth, I knew not at that time how ill-prepared I was for this present task which now fills me with anxiety and threatens to crush me.[4]

He then begs the bishop to grant him a little time to study the Bible for the profit of those committed to his care. After his episcopal consecration, he bargained with his flock to give him some time so that he could study the Bible. The compact was soon violated: "I am not permitted to have the leisure for the work I wish to do."[5] And after long, toilsome years of study, he still felt that he had learned so little from the Bible that he wanted a coadjutor to lighten his burden. In 426 he begs the flock, "Let me now, if God grants me a little longer time to live, devote that little space, not to sloth or idleness, but to His Holy Scriptures wherein, as far as He allows and strengthens me, I may exercise myself."[6] From beginning to end, Augustine saw the need of feeding upon the Bible, this "daily bread of my soul," in order to feed the hungering flock.[7]

The bishop outlines his role in preaching the Bible in the opening words of a sermon commenting on the multiplication of the loaves:

> In explaining the Holy Scriptures to you, I, as it were, break bread for you. As hungering, receive it. . . . And you who are rich in your banquet, be not meager in good works and deeds. What I deal out is not my own. What you eat, I eat. What you live upon, I live upon. We have in heaven a common storehouse; from there comes the word of God.[8]

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[4] *Epist.* 21, 3-4 (33: 88-89).

[5] *Epist.* 213,5 (33: 968).

[6] *Ibid.*, 6 (969).

[7] He often refers to the daily bread of the Pater Noster prayer as the bread of the Scriptures. Cf. *Serm.* 56,6,10 (38: 381); 57,7 (389). The flock hungers for bread, so Augustine breaks bread for them: "Scripturas sacras exponentes vobis, quasi panes frangimus bovis," *Serm.* 95,1 (38: 581).

[8] *Serm.* 95,1 (38: 581).

Italicized scriptural references sprinkle throughout almost every page of Migne's edition of Augustine's sermons. The language of the Bible is habitual with him. Its peculiar turns and favorite expressions are constantly on his lips.[9] Here is how he considers his duty:

> In expounding the word of God and, more especially, the Holy Gospel, we must, brethren, as much as we can, dwell fully on every part of the sacred text, *not leaving one single passage unnoticed.* In addition, we ourselves must be nourished according to our capacity. I must minister to you whence I am nourished.[10]

His type of biblical preaching centered on glossing the Bible. This was an adoption of the classical *grammaticus* who explained Virgil and Homer by breaking the text into fragments, and analyzing each word under the microscope of encylopedic learning. Augustine's process was identical; only the text had been changed.[11]

Scrupulous to explain every passage, the Bishop encountered many difficulties. Of course, he would rather read the Gospel to the people than discuss in his own words the questions he finds in it,[12] but these very questionings have been willed by God: "The Magister has given trouble in order to instruct, has sown a difficulty in order to excite earnest attention."[13] "For there are in Holy Scripture deep mysteries which are hidden lest they should be held cheap; sought, that they may employ us; opened, that they may feed us."[14] As he wrote Volusian:

> The very language in which the Holy Scripture is expressed is accessible to all, but penetrable by few. In its easily understood parts, it speaks to the heart of the learned and unlearned like a familiar friend

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[9] Besides his ingenious adaptations and unconscious allusions, there are 13,276 formal citations from the Old Testament and 29,540 from the New Testament, according to the Maurist editions! Cf. Henri Marrou, *Saint Augustin et l'augustinisme* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1956), p. 57. C. Douais affirms that from Augustine's works, two-thirds of the Bible can be constructed: "Augustin," *Dictionnaire de la Bible, Supplement,* I, col. 1240.

[10] *In Joh.* 2,1 (35:1388).

[11] Cf. F. Van de Meer, *Saint Augustin, Pasteur d'âmes,* trans. from Dutch by E. Viale *et al.* (Paris: Editions Alsatia, 1955), II, 246.

[12] *Serm.* 356,1 (39:1574).

[13] *Serm.* 126,8,10 (38:703).

[14] *In Ps.* 140,1 (37:1815).

who uses no subterfuge. Even those truths which it veils in mystery, it does not set forth with such lofty eloquence that the slow and unskilled mind dares not approach—like a poor man fearing to draw near to a rich one—but, in simple speech, Holy Scripture invites all. It not only feeds them with evident truths but even exercises them with the hidden ones, for truth exists in both what is clear and what is hidden. But lest the obvious truths should cause disgust, the hidden ones arouse longings; longings bring on certain renewals; renewals bring sweet inner knowledge. By these means depraved minds are set straight, small ones are nourished, great ones are filled with delight.[15]

The preacher searches for Scriptural difficulties and solutions and presents them to his audience, thereby gaining attention and provoking thought. Augustine, I think, is certain of the effectiveness of this technique. Almost every sermon contains a Scriptural problem; some sermons, in fact, center around one problem and its solution. Psychologically, the technique is sound. Curiosity springs from a love of the known rather than the unknown. We are conscious of the knowledge we already possess, but we cannot know the limitations of that knowledge unless we know that other things exist, that our knowledge can unfold and flower. An explicit problem awakens this consciousness of ignorance or deficiency and thus becomes an impetus to sound reflective thinking and hard reasoning, whereas thinking without the perception of an actual problem is often barren.[16]

The role of the preacher *qua* teacher is to prod the mind: "The reason why you question another is no other than to teach the one you question."[17] The teacher suggests that present knowledge has a privation. He then guides the mind to march from the known to the unknown in order to conquer new ground. Every word in the Bible is true. Contradictions that appear in the text cannot be true contradictions.[18] Present a contradiction and curiosity is aroused, for the mind wishes to rest in a resolution of the problem.

[15] *Epist.* 137,18 (33: 524).

[16] *De Trin.* 10, 1-2 (42: 971-975).

[17] *De Mag.* 1,1 (32: 1194).

[18] Inerrancy is intimately connected with inspiration, cf. *Gen. ad Litt.* 4,34,53 (34: 319); *De Civ. Dei* 21,7,1 (41: 719). It is the duty of the interpreter to see that in his explanations he does not leave the impression that Scripture is contradicting itself, a thing which is impossible. *Serm. Mont.* 1,22,76 (34: 1267).

Sermon seventy-one is a good example. Christ emphatically said, "He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world or in the world to come" (*Matt.* 12:32). For Augustine this was the most difficult problem in Scripture, also the most important. He shows the difficulty: "What will become of those whom the Church desires to gain? When they have come into the Church from whatsoever error, is the hope in the remission of sins a false hope?" The pagans who blaspheme our sanctification blaspheme the Holy Ghost. The Jews think that Christ cast out devils through the Prince of devils, not through the Holy Ghost. Heretics deny that the Holy Ghost is in the Catholic Church. Some even deny His existence. Apostates, having received the Holy Ghost through baptism, leave the Church, apparently ungrateful of the gift. Are all these people forever unforgiven? Moreover, every doctrine contrary to truth is against the Holy Spirit, "and yet the Church does not cease to reform and gather out of every error those who shall receive the remission of sins and the Holy Ghost Himself." Setting up the problem, Augustine preaches that God wills "to exercise us by the difficulty of the question and not to deceive us by a false decision." He has taken an apparently uninteresting text, presented a practical difficulty, thereby creating interest. He then proposes the solution.

He develops sermon after sermon in this way. Space permits but a few examples:

1. "For the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, so that you do not what you would" (*Gal.* 5:17). Does this mean that we can use as an excuse for our sins, "I am forced, I am overcome by evil"?[19]
2. God saw the world, that it was good. But is not the Creator overlooking all the evil in the world?[20]
3. How can the dead bury the dead (*Luke* 9:60)?[21]

More often Augustine combines two scriptural passages that appear to be contradictory or at least create confusion:

4. "God tempteth no man" (*James* 1:13).
   BUT: "The Lord our God tempteth you" (*Deut.* 13:3); furthermore, Christ "tempteth him [Philip]" (*John* 6:5).[22]

[19] *Serm.* 128,5,7 (38:716).
[20] *Serm.* 96, 4 ff. (586-588).
[21] *Serm.* 100,1,2 (603).
[22] *Serm.* 71,10,15 (452-453).

5. Christ contradicts Himself in the same sentence: "In praying, do not multiply words . . . for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him" (*Matt.* 6:7-8). If the Father knows, why ask at all?
   BUT: "Ask, and it shall be given you" (*Matt.* 7:7).[23]
6. "Thou art beautiful above the sons of men" (*Ps.* 44:2).
   BUT: "There is no beauty in him, nor comeliness . . ." (*Is.* 53:2).[24]
7. "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of Israel" (*Matt.* 15:24).
   BUT: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold" (*John* 10:16).[25]
8. "Let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works" (*Matt.* 5:16).
   BUT: "Take heed not to do your good before men, in order to be seen by men" (*Matt.* 6:1).[26]
9. A man wants to bury his father: "Honor thy father and thy mother."
   BUT: "Let the dead bury their dead" (*Luke* 9:60).[27]

The constant use of this pedagogical method throughout sermons gives both preacher and audience a "cautious attitude of mind"[28]—a realization that not every line of Scripture can be understood at first glance.[29] Buried beneath the lines are treasures which cannot but enrich the soul. The cautious and zealous investigator digs deep, finds, and shares, aware all the while that it is "hazardous to consider as known what is not known." In preaching the Bible this caution is far superior to blundering rash assertions.[30] Augustine preaches:

[23] *Serm.* 80,2 (494).
[24] *Serm.* 95,4 (582).
[25] *Serm.* 77 (483-490).
[26] *Serm.* 54 (372-377).
[27] *Serm.* 100,1,2 (603).
[28] *De Mag* 10,31 (32:1213).
[29] ". . . Even the most advanced in years, the most penetrating of mind, the most ardent zealous one in learning, might find himself described by what Scripture says, 'When a man hath finished, then he shall begin,'" *Epist.* 137,3 (33:516-517).
[30] *Epist.* 95,4 (33:353).

Remember this: not to be disturbed by the Scriptures which you do not yet understand, nor be puffed up by what you do. What you do not understand, wait for with submission; and what you do understand, hold fast with charity.[31]

In addition to this *animi subjectio,*[32] Augustine asks for prayers to enlighten both himself and his flock. For example, in putting forth the problem—"Show him his fault, between thee and him alone" (*Matt.* 18:15) and "Rebuke them in the presence of all" (*I Tim.* 5:20)—Augustine says:

Are we listening to this controversy as judges? That be far from us! Yes, rather as those whose place it is to be under the Judge. Let us knock that we may obtain, that it may be opened to us. Let us fly beneath the wings of the Lord God.[33]

The searching in common, under the action of the Holy Spirit, for an understanding of the text, follows from the delicate balance of Augustine's sermons, carefully planned, yet delivered *ex tempore.* We may note that "too much emphasis cannot be laid on the fact that there is not the slightest reason to believe that Augustine ever wrote or dictated a sermon, and then read it or delivered it from memory."[34] This *ex tempore* preaching necessitates vast remote preparation: an awareness of the Church's teaching, the careful reading and memorizing of the Bible, acute observations of daily life for ready examples, development of sensitivity to the immediate needs and capacities of the people, rapid adaptability, and a quick mind coupled with a sure flow of words. True, when we read Augustine, we are listening to a master who had trium-

[31] *Serm.* 51,14,35 (38:354).

[32] *Serm.* 145,1 (791).

[33] *Serm.* 82,5,8 (510).

[34] Deferrari, "St. Augustine's Method of Composing and Delivering Sermons," *The American Journal of Philology,* XLIII (1922), 119. According to Deferrari, stenographers *(notarii)* took down in shorthand the sermons as they were being delivered. Van de Meer suggests the *notarii* may have been recruited from the clerics of Augustine's community. *Op. cit.,* II, 208. Certainly this position helps explain the vigorous, conversational tone, and many irregularities found in the discourses. Apparently the Bishop sometimes delivered even impromptu talks, as when he prepared a short psalm (138) to expound, but saw that the flustered lector had sung a different one at the last moment: "So I prefer to follow God's will in the lector's mistake rather than my own in my original purpose" (37:1784).

phantly carried off the prize for rhetoric against brilliant Roman competitors. Nevertheless, a master can teach underlings.

Augustine wants the preacher to have a working knowledge of biblical languages, plus natural history, music, history, logic, and philosophy.[35] He should not only read extensively and memorize accurately the Bible, but thoroughly understand it and carefully search into its meaning.[36] He should develop Augustine's habit of pinning down ideas in writing—the ideas that arise while meditating "during brief moments on the law of God."[37] If he does possess a well-stored mind, he will look to the works of others as well, especially to scripture commentaries and printed sermons.

But above all Augustine would have the preacher develop a devout attitude towards his use of Scripture. It is the Lord who will give him the proper understanding of the text, and who will enlighten the hearts of his hearers. Even in his sermons, Augustine remained ever the Doctor of Grace:

> All that I have said has been said only to make the difficulty of the question increase. You yourselves see how valid it is and almost insoluble. May the Lord help me to solve it. May He who deigned to put it before us deign also to explain it. Pray with me for some issue. Give me your ears; give Him your heart. What He wishes to suggest to me, I will communicate to you.[38]

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[35] *De Doc. Christ.* 2,11,16 (34:42-43); 16,24 (47); 29,45 (56-57); 28,42 (55-56); 31,48 (58); 40,60 (63). Augustine does not think it pedantic to trace a word back to its original Greek for the simple people. For example in his commentaries on St. John, cf. 3,8 (35:1399); 82,1 (1843); 83,2 (1845); 100,1 (1891); 104,3 (1903), etc.

[36] *De Doc. Christ.* 4,5,7 (34:92).

[37] Hugh Pope, O.P., *Saint Augustine of Hippo* (London: Sands and Co., 1937), p. 167. Because of frequent repetition of phrases and thoughts, Christopher thinks Augustine probably kept a commonplace book wherein he noted down turns of expressions and metaphors that particularly appealed to him: *S. Aureli Augustini Hipponiensis Episcopi, De catechizandis rudibus, liber unus* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America, 1926), p. 217.

[38] *Serm.* 244,2 (38:1149).

ST. JEROME'S ATTITUDE TOWARD MARRIAGE AND WOMEN

II

In his *Adversus Jovinianum* St. Jerome attacked Jovinian and his followers because they attempted to exalt marriage at the expense of virginity. His reply was a strong reassertion of the excellence of virginity; this occasioned the charge that Jerome hated marriage and that he was a Manichaean. Jerome rejected the accusation vehemently, and, indeed, an examination of his works shows that he was simply restating traditional Catholic doctrine.

What then may be said of his attitude toward women? Can the same be said for him here as in his treatment of marriage?

First of all, let us remember that many of the things he says about wives, he would apply equally to husbands. It would be very clumsy for him to repeat both of them as he goes along. When, for example, Jerome says that a husband should not love his wife as an adulteress, he, of course, also means that wives should not love their husbands as adulterers. If he thinks it is better for widows not to remarry, he would like to apply the same to widowers. If it is better for a woman to be without a husband, it is also better for a man to be without a wife. In short, woman does not make marriage inferior to virginity, but rather it is the relationship between husband and wife in marriage which is inferior to the state of a man or woman living in the state of virginity. This is Jerome's point throughout the work. Therefore, we must be careful lest we be unfair to him and interpret some of his statements as anti-feminist.

Furthermore, it is easy to forget that Jerome has many good things to say in praise of women. Besides the obvious case of the Virgin Mary, he also finds room for Christian wives, widows and virgins who live in the chastity becoming to the state of each. He turns, too, to the history of the Romans and Greeks and finds many virgins and wives whom he praises highly; in fact, it is rather notable that it is quite regularly the *man* who comes off badly in narration. We are told, for example, that men in choosing their

wives look for riches rather than chastity, and that in marrying they use not their eyes but their fingers (*Adversus Jovinianum*, chapter 46). Here again, the truth of the matter seems to be that rather than giving praise and condemnation exclusively to men or women, he parcels it out impartially according to their deserts.

But frankly, there are some troublesome passages which seem to justify the charge of anti-feminism against Jerome. The strongest of these is found in chapter 28, in which he marshalls a considerable collection of scriptural texts which are not complimentary to women. Jovinian had adduced the example of Solomon and pointed out that although he was "uxorious," Solomon had the privilege of building the temple of the Lord. Jerome, however, pointed out that this was in the early days of his reign before he had taken the hundreds of wives and concubines who turned his head from God (chapter 24).[1] Now he returns to this subject and uses the very example of Solomon to show that marriage is inferior to virginity. Jovinian praised the wisdom of Solomon; Jerome replies: "Let us show what this very man [Solomon] with his many wives and concubines thought of marriage." Jerome's purpose, therefore, in what follows is in line with his main contention that marriage is inferior to virginity, and he seeks to use the following quotations, largely from the *Book of Proverbs,* to point up the dangers in marrying, and wants to turn Jovinian's argument against him so as to dissuade people from marriage.

Jerome quotes *Proverbs* to show that a foolish and bold woman is earth-born and follows the first Adam who is of the earth, and not the second, who is from heaven: "Like a worm in the wood, so a wicked woman destroyeth her husband." To his own objection that these things are said only of wicked wives, Jerome answers that it is not worth the risk to marry when one does not know whether she will be a good wife or bad. *Proverbs* says that a desert land is better than a wide house with a contentious and passionate woman. Jerome's comment: "How seldom we find a wife without these faults, he knows who is married."

Likewise, a contentious woman makes her husband a mere lodger in the house. A woman's love is compared to the grave, the

[1] He showed an awareness of this on another occasion when writing to Marcella, Letter XXVII.

parched earth, and the fire which "Saith not, Enough." Jerome's comment: "It is not the harlot, or the adulteress who is spoken of, but woman's love in general is accused of ever being insatiable; put it out, it bursts into flame; give it plenty, it is again in need; it enervates a man's mind, and engrosses all thought except for the passion which it feeds." In the same way an odious woman who is married to a good husband is classified with a servant who becomes king, a fool when he is filled with meat, and a handmaid who is heir to her mistress, as four great evils in the world. Jerome then recapitulates the material provided by Solomon against marriage in these words: "He who marries a wife is uncertain whether he is marrying an odious woman, or one worthy of love. If she is odious, she is intolerable. If worthy of love, her love is compared to the grave, to the parched earth and to fire."

Now, it must be admitted that in the things which Jerome said here, he was somewhat harsh; he was using that flair for striking, vivid language which makes his pages take fire even today. But is it really as bad as it is made to sound? It seems very doubtful. The plain fact is that Jerome was challenged by Jovinian with the example of Solomon, a man who was certainly deeply enamoured of marriage, but who still was considered worthy to build the temple of the Lord. This is meant to be a sign of God's approval which was not given to David since he was forbidden to build the temple as the result of his adultery and the murder of Uriah the Hittite. Jerome took up the challenge of Jovinian and sought to turn the authority of Solomon against him. What he quotes from Solomon, therefore, is meant to support Jerome's proposition that marriage is inferior to virginity; it is meant to point up the risks and difficulties of marriage and consequently to persuade people to forego it. The fact that the difficulties which he points out concern contentious, nagging and passionate women rather than men is, we believe, merely incidental to the purpose. In other words, in our opinion Jerome had no serious intention of disparaging women and exalting men. He used the material provided by *Proverbs* and found that it formed an excellent argument for his purpose; if the quotations had spoken of the faults of men instead of women, no doubt he would have used them just as readily. The sex of the offending partner in marriage is immaterial.

Now what of his use of the long quotation from Theophrastus' *On Marriage?*[2] Again, let us clarify the context. In the beginning of chapter 41 Jerome says:

> I have given enough and more than enough illustrations from the divine writings of Christian chastity and angelic virginity. But as I understand that our opponent in his commentaries summons us to the tribunal of worldly wisdom, and we are told that views of this kind are never accepted in the world, and that our religion has invented a dogma against nature, I will quickly run through Greek and Roman and Foreign History, and will show that virginity ever took the lead of chastity.

In the following six chapters, he gives example after example of women who carefully preserved their virginity and marital chastity. With the exception of one or two who are condemned for having violated their chastity, the women are uniformly praised for their high appreciation of chastity, even if Jerome would not have praised all of them for the methods they adopted in preserving it. It is really the men who come off badly here, because they are almost without exception depicted as violaters of virgins and chaste wives.

In chapters 41-42, Jerome speaks of unmarried virgins and then in chapter 43, he speaks of married women who preferred even death to entering second marriages after the death of their beloved husbands. This theme carries Jerome up to chapter 47; at this point, he feels that he has given plenty of examples and can be excused from giving more: he might even be "justly censured by my learned reader" for giving so many. "But what am I to do when the women of our time press me with apostolic authority, and before the first husband is buried, repeat from morning to night the precepts which allow a second marriage? Seeing they despise the fidelity which Christian purity dictates, let them at least learn chastity from the heathen." Then he gives the lengthy quotation from Theophrastus, a book which is "worth its weight in gold."

Theophrastus had posed the question whether a wise man marries. He laid down the conditions that his wife must be fair, of good character, and honest parentage, the husband in good

[2] For a literal reading of this passage and a harsh interpretation of Jerome's use of the passage, see Grützmacher, *Hieronymous* (Berlin: Trowitsch, 1906), II, 157-158.

health and ample means. Then he proceeds: "But all these conditions are seldom satisfied in marriage. A wise man, therefore, must not take a wife." What follows is a merciless satire on wives and leaves scarcely a stone upon a stone. A man finds it impossible to devote time to philosophy if he is married; he finds it equally hard to support a poor wife or to endure a rich one. She is constantly jealous, contentious and suspicious. Be she fair or ugly, her chastity cannot be trusted, nor can she be depended upon to be the manager of the house, the solace of weariness or the banisher of solitude. Friends and servants are more help in sickness, and if she is sick, a husband must fall sick with her and never leave her bedside. To marry for the sake of children, to have your name endure or to have a solace in old age, is the height of stupidity. It is better to pick one's heirs from friends and relatives of whom one is sure than to take the chance of having children who may be the cause of ruin.

After he has quoted this piece from Theophrastus, Jerome turns it into an *a fortiori* argument for virginity. Let us remember that he has quoted it in order to show women desirous of second marriages how they should learn chastity from the heathen. Now he adds: if a heathen speaks thus and rejects the plea for marriage as providing heirs, should a joint heir of Christ desire children and delight in a long line of heirs who may fall into the clutches of Antichrist? The passage is turned toward Jerome's main theme and provides another argument for foregoing marriage. In all this there is no indication that he is quoting the passage to vilify women. In the passage which immediately follows the quotation, he makes no comment on the charges made against women. However, he then goes on to the other passages from ancient history and literature and finds many examples of wicked wives who persecuted their husbands: "In all the bombast of tragedy and the overthrow of houses, cities and kingdoms, it is the wives and concubines who stir up strife." He moves on to quote others against marriage such as Epicurus, Aristotle, Plutarch and Plato. It is notable that the references from the last three fit in well with the final passages of the first book which preach chastity in men and women alike and proclaim the greatest virtue of women to be chastity. Thus, as he progresses and moves to a climax in the section of the work dealing with marriage, Jerome first of all quotes the example of wicked wives, then

reasons for not marrying, and finally he delivers an exhortation to men and women to preserve chaste love in marriage. By this he does not mean virginal marriage, but he means that their love should be according to reason, not the plaything of passion. A husband should not treat his wife as an adulteress, nor should he play the part of a lover but of husband to his wife. So too the wife will find chastity her true glory with her children and before the world.

What does the context suggest about his attitude toward women in these places? As we see it, these passages suggest that Jerome is not recounting the examples of the wicked wives and the strife that can be caused by wives and concubines simply to *condemn* them. It does seem that he is establishing the proposition, as Cavallera seems to suggest, that women are either chaste and then they have the crown of virtues which sets all else aright, or they are unchaste and then they are the root of all manner of evil.[3] This fits in well with his avowed purpose of keeping the Roman matrons from rushing too quickly into second marriages. Furthermore, he is condemning the husbands and lovers who by inordinate love and passion have abandoned wisdom. Jerome tells us that the wise man should love his wife with judgment, not with passion. Although the greater stress is placed in this section on the misdoings of wives, the conclusion of the chapter suggests that he is engaging in no wholesale condemnation of women nor is he exonerating men who are governed by passion toward women.

Throughout this whole discussion, it must be obvious that in Jerome we are dealing with a man who is capable of expressing strong views strongly, a man who is well equipped with the type of language which can present vivid pictures and drive home a point forcefully. He was conscious that he was fighting for something that was very dear to himself and very necessary for the world in which he lived. The ideal which he proposed was a high one, and Jerome was never one to lower his ideals simply because they were unpopular or because they caused their followers hardship. When he saw the place of virginity lowered in the scale of values, it is clear that he also saw the corollary, namely, that

[3] Ferdinand Cavallera, *Saint Jerome* (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1922), I, 159.

chastity in married persons and widows would lose correspondingly in estimation. The world in which he lived needed badly the sort of exhortation he was capable of giving it. He himself had felt the great temptations presented to the men and women of the Roman world. Since he had not been spotless in his purity, the problems carried an even stronger urgency. His moral problems were evidently not nearly as severe as those of Augustine, but just as Augustine was subsequently unable to talk of sex and marriage without being somewhat severe, so Jerome finds it hard at times to hit the right balance of expression. Both of them do achieve it but not in every individual statement, and consequently it is necessary to take the "particulars in connection with the general tone," as Jerome asked.[4]

In his remarkable letter to Eustochium on virginity, Jerome recounts how the memory of the dancing girls of Rome plagued him even in the desert when his body was almost half-dead from penance and fasting.[5] When he wrote to Marcella in order to defend the way of life followed by Blaesilla, Jerome's spiritual child, he painted a vivid picture of some of the Roman matrons who had lost their husbands.[6] They are the same people described in the letter to Eustochium.[7] They are the ones who have not welcomed the opportunity of continence when it came, but are concerned with seeking husbands or rather preferring the license of widowhood to the restraints of marriage. If Jerome on occasion has some rather sharp things to say concerning women, it is good to remember that he had particular ones in mind, women who were no more Christian than the men who accompanied them in their corruption.[8]

It may be significant that in the two letters he wrote to Pammachius and the one sent to Domnio concerning attacks made on the *Adversus Jovinianum,* Jerome did not find it necessary to defend himself against charges that he was unfair in his attitude

[4] On this point Cavallera (*op. cit.,* II, 72-75) presents the evidence found in Jerome and adds a warning against interpreting it literally in every instance.

[5] Letter XXII, n. 7.

[6] Letter XXXVIII, n. 3.

[7] Letter XXII, n. 16.

[8] *Adversus Jovinianum,* II, ch. 37 has a description of those whom he has in mind.

toward women or that people thought that he was condemning them. This may be an indication that there were no such charges made against Jerome, that his attitude toward women was sufficiently well known to the Mediterranean world to preclude any such interpretation of his writings.

Such a possibility is very likely. Especially in Rome, it was well known that Jerome had long been the director of holy women there and in the Holy Land. During both of his periods of residence in Rome, Jerome had gathered together groups of virgins and holy widows. To them he expounded the scriptures and directed them in the ascetical life which brought them to sanctity. His work was not confined to women, but women always formed an important part of his following. Indeed, it was his association with them, and in particular with Paula, which caused him to abandon Rome for the East. In a letter to Asella, he recounts the attacks made on him.[9] Under the rhetoric and vivid coloring, we get the story of a man who was honored in Rome until he became acquainted with Paula: "Almost everyone concurred in judging me worthy of the episcopate; Damasus, of blessed memory, spoke no words but mine. Men called me holy, humble, eloquent." He had nothing to do with the rouged and adorned ladies of Rome and no one but Paula had power to subdue him:

> She mourned and she fasted, she was squalid with dirt, her eyes were dim with weeping. For whole nights she would pray to the Lord for mercy, and often the rising sun found her still at her prayers. . . . The only woman who took my fancy was one whom I had not so much as seen at table. But when I began to revere, respect and venerate her as her conspicuous chastity deserved, all my former virtues forsook me on the spot.

He speaks of the attacks made on him because of Paula and those in her company. Had they preferred to live lives of luxury as widows who were independent and wanted to enjoy life, they would have been saluted as ladies of high rank and saintliness, but when they donned sackcloth and ashes and fasted instead of feasting, they were condemned and Jerome was hounded because he directed them. Even after he went to the Holy Land, he continued to maintain close contact with these women. Paula and

[9] Letter XLV.

her daughter Eustochium came to Bethlehem and started a community of virgins who were under Jerome's direction. By letter Jerome continued to direct those in other places. Usually these letters deal with subjects pertaining to religious practice, prayer, virginity, scripture, and the like. But he also wrote an occasional letter of friendship, for example, the little note to Marcella to thank her and her friends for some small articles sent as gifts.[10] There is a certain austere tenderness in many of these letters, such as that which he wrote to Eustochium on the occasion of Paula's death,[11] or that to Marcella on the same occasion.[12] One who has read these letters needs no proof that he could heap the highest praise on holy women. We are so accustomed to see in Jerome "the irascible hermit" that we can easily overlook the other facets of his complex character. His faults were very human ones, but so were his virtues, and it does him far less than justice to imagine that he was possessed of a narrow puritanical spirit in his dealings with women.

It seems highly probable that the *Adversus Jovinianum* would not convey to those who knew him the notion that Jerome was anti-feminist. Especially in Rome they might remember that he was criticized for spending too much time instructing women in scriptures. With characteristic straightforwardness, Jerome retorted that he would gladly devote some time to instructing men in scriptures if he could find any who were interested in such studies.[13]

One final point. Those who read literally some of the satirical and rhetorical thrusts that Jerome aims at women do not display a similar readiness to do the same in all cases. If we read Jerome literally, then he would not only be against women but also against many other things and people. Certainly, he would have to be called anti-clerical. Read, for example, the letter to Eustochium on safeguarding virginity and see how he speaks of some of the clergy of Rome.[14] The passage is too long for complete quotation, but we might include some selections in order to indicate the tone:

[10] Letter XLIV.
[11] Letter XXIX.
[12] Letter XXXVIII.
[13] Pierre de Labriolle, *History and Literature of Christianity*, translated by Herbert Wilson (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1924), pp. 348-349. In brief compass, Labriolle gives a clear, well-balanced view of St. Jerome and his works.
[14] Letter XXII, n. 28.

Such men think of nothing but their dress; they use perfumes freely, and see that there are no creases in their leather shoes. Their curling hair shows traces of the tongs; their fingers glisten with rings; they walk on tiptoe across a damp road, so as not to splash their feet. . . . He rises and goes forth with the sun; he has the order of his visits duly arranged, and he takes the shortest road; and, troublesome old man that he is, forces his way almost in the bedchambers of ladies yet asleep. . . . All the women, in fact, fear to cross the news-carrier of the town. Chastity and fasting are alike distasteful to him. What he likes is a savory breakfast—say, off a plump young crane such as is commonly called a cheaper. . . . Wherever you turn he is the first man that you see before you. Whatever news is noised abroad he is either the originator of the rumor or its magnifier.

What a contrast between this Roman clerical dandy and the ascetical biblical scholar who studies, prays and does penance in the cave at Bethlehem! Jerome could not be considered a respecter of persons, and it mattered little to him who the person was; if he was wrong and unrepentant, Jerome spared no words in denouncing him. Women were not the only ones to feel the sharp end of his pen.

In summary, then, we can say with perfect truthfulness that St. Jerome condemned neither marriage nor women in his *Adversus Jovinianum*. It is ludicrous to speak, as Grützmacher does, of Jerome's "fanatical hatred of marriage."[15] Such a thing never existed outside of the imaginations of Jerome's enemies. It is true that on occasion he did say some things about marriage and women which sound rather damning if they are taken in isolation, but one who does that with Jerome is running the risk of misreading him constantly. He pointed this out himself because he was quite aware that his polemical method of writing did not lend itself to this type of interpretation.

The fact is that Jovinian and many others of his time were not only attacking virginity but the whole ascetical ideal. This could not but stir Jerome to action, and for him action was usually in the form of the spoken or written word. We certainly miss many of the positive things which could be said about the beauties of the married state, its degree of excellence, the opportunity for mutual sanctification which it provides, but such things would

[15] Grützmacher, *op. cit.*, II, 167.

have been out of place in a situation such as this. We make a mistake if we look to the *Adversus Jovinianum* for a complete statement of Jerome's attitude toward marriage and women, but we can find this statement in other places if we only take the trouble to look.

It is interesting to speculate on the kind of headlines which would greet Jerome's work in today's press. No doubt, he would feel that sixteen centuries had made little change. The ideal of Christian perfection is no more popular now than it was then; there is as much misunderstanding, deliberate or not, as there was in Jerome's time. When a modern pope speaks to the Christian world concerning the counsels of perfection, he is simply taking his place in a long line of the heralds of Christ who have found it their duty to remind the world that each age should strive to follow Christ with all zeal and devotion. With the wisdom of the centuries behind him, a modern pope will be saddened but not surprised to find that so many do not comprehend. Yet he can look about him and see, as did Jerome in his day, that there are also many who live lives hidden in Christ, absorbed in the pursuit of Christian perfection.

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ROME AND THE STATUS OF CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

One of the most interesting books to come to the office of *The American Ecclesiastical Review* for a long time is *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: His Life and Spirit.*[1] It was written by Msgr. Leon Cristiani, a priest of the diocese of Belley in France, and long a member of the faculty of the Catholic Institute of Lyons. The book is published pseudonymously. It is attributed to a "Nicolas Corte." In his own introduction to the English version, however, the translator assures his readers that the book was actually written by "Leon Christiani."

This book is important in that it points up very sharply and in a most practical way the need for adequate and accurate teaching of certain basic theses within the field of fundamental dogmatic theology. At this moment in the life of the Catholic Church, there is a grave danger that some students of sacred theology, especially those who are young and more readily responsive to suggestion, may be influenced to abandon some highly important theological truths under the pretext that these traditional and highly accurate teachings are in some way opposed to or by "what science tells us." Permanent harm may come to the spiritual and the intellectual life of the Catholic student if he is led to imagine that the theses he has been taught as a part of his fundamental dogmatic theology are merely lessons he should learn in order to pass an examination, and not truths which are valid and normative for all his scholarly life. Monsignor Cristiani's book is particularly valuable in that it shows us the particular theses that tend to be overlooked or forgotten in our own time.

In this book Monsignor Cristiani seems to have set something of a record in the line of emotional adulation of his hero. From the opening passages of the book until its close, he has strained every resource of the public relations art to give his reader the impression that Father Teilhard was definitely a "great mind," a man of

[1] The Macmillan Company in New York published the book this year. The English translation was done by Martin Jarrett-Kerr, C.R., who also contributed a preface of his own. The original French work, entitled *La vie et l'âme de Teilhard de Chardin,* was published in 1957.

almost unique importance in the field of Catholic thought. Then, of course, the reader is brought to see that the teachings of the "great mind" seemed to differ in appearance from what the *magisterium* of the Catholic Church and the traditional writers in sacred theology have taught on the same subjects. And furthermore Monsignor Cristiani himself very clearly implies that he considers Catholic theology to be in need of some new precursor or prophet who will renew it. His book has given us a welcome occasion to bring up certain theses which are all too frequently taken for granted.

We should, however, first advert to Monsignor Cristiani's almost awe-stricken reverence for his hero. Actually this sets the tone, not only for his book, but for most of the type of writing espoused by the men of his particular school.

We read in the first paragraph of the author's introduction to *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin:*

> We cannot predict with certainty what the judgment of time will be upon Teilhard's genius. Will he be, as some foresee, ranged in the company of his immortal compatriot, Pascal? Or will he be simply a great precursor, which is what he himself wanted? Only our grandchildren will be able to tell.[2]

The last two pages of the text of Monsignor Cristiani's little work are given over to an evaluation of his hero. The author asks: "Who can we compare him [Father Teilhard] to, to give him a stature which will not diminish him and yet will not be out of proportion to what he did?"[3]

Reluctantly Monsignor Cristiani decides that his hero was not "the Thomas Aquinas of the Twentieth Century." And, he assures us, "we do not think Scotus was enough of a living figure for us to compare Teilhard with him."[4] Finally he expresses the belief that Father Teilhard resembled Origen:

> The Church was disturbed and vexed by origenism as she now is, under our very eyes, by teilhardism. And yet Origen, who was discussed and contested, and even condemned by Councils three centuries after his

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[2] *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: His Life and Spirit,* p. xviii.
[3] *Ibid.,* p. 114.
[4] *Ibid.*

death, has remained one of the glories of Christian thought. His errors have not prevented us from doing him justice and from continuing to hold him in tender regard. We believe the same will be true of Teilhard. He will remain an ornament of Christian thought. In spite of his gaps, his inadequacies, even his errors, he will still be dear to our hearts because of his fine spiritual ambitions, his vast syntheses, and above all —for this above all will survive—his *cosmic sense*. He will have helped finally to lay the ghost of evolutionism, to get us accustomed to it, to see it in a new, fairer and more reassuring light. He will have laboured to enlarge our devotion, our prayer, our spiritual vision, so as to make them not merely planetary but galactic and inter-galactic—that is, genuinely universal. The Christian faith was in essence all those things. But it had somewhat forgotten them. He sought to breathe a new soul into it. And in a large measure he has succeeded.

Finally, the last analogy between Origen and him, though an analogy which we state without being able to applaud it: there was with Teilhard an imperturbable eschatological optimism which is closely allied to the "final apotheosis" that one finds in Origen, which he substituted for the traditional apocalypses, the "restoration of all things in God," and in which the demons and Satan himself were finally brought to the centre of light and happiness—to God.

An error of this type has a certain grandeur, without, in our view, ceasing to be an error. It does not lessen the esteem we have for a fine soul.[5]

Monsignor Cristiani's adulation of his hero, unfortunately, sometimes verges upon the ludicrous. Thus we find him writing, after he has given a citation from *Le phénomène humain:* "When we read such an affirmation we rub our eyes, we are startled, and we say: 'But surely he is extrapolating.' "[6] And again, after quoting a particularly banal passage from the same work, Monsignor Cristiani writes: "Reading that, we add in a whisper what the ancients used to say: *Natura non deficit in necessariis!*"[7] And, commenting on a work by another admirer of the writings of Father Teilhard, Monsignor Cristiani avers: "But what is worth recording in Tresmontant is his observations on the objections made against his hero—who is our hero too."[8]

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 114 f.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 61.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 71.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

The American reader has been accustomed to find such enthusiastically excessive praise only in television commercials and in blurbs written by the more obscurantist liberal Catholics in support of one of their fellow mediocrities. Still there is every probability that the more impressionable among Monsignor Cristiani's readers will be led to agree with him that his hero (who was also Tresmontant's hero) was indeed an exalted figure in the history of Catholic thought. There are unfortunately some reputations in the fields of Catholic letters and thought that have been manufactured chiefly by such Madison Avenue methods.

But for us the one important factor in all of this is to be found in the reason behind Monsignor Cristiani's somewhat naïve enthusiasm for the thought and the writings of Father Teilhard. One of the most revealing expressions of that reason is to be found in this passage:

> Something is happening which is analogous to the revolution of St. Thomas Aquinas assimilating Aristotelianism and incorporating it, not as it stood, but in its valid elements, into the heart of Christian doctrine. Teilhard wanted to be the Thomas Aquinas of our time.[9]

It would seem, at least, that Monsignor Cristiani was under the impression that Christian doctrine, Catholic theology, and Catholic spirituality, as they exist at this particular time, are in some way inadequate to the needs of the day. In the last analysis, he lauds Teilhard to the skies because, in his opinion at least, Teilhard took some sort of step towards bringing Catholic teaching up to date. We can, of course, pass over Monsignor Cristiani's claim that Father Teilhard "sought to breathe a new soul" into the Christian faith. It does not seem that any Catholic author could seriously have meant words like those. Yet it certainly appears true that Catholic doctrine and Catholic theology at least are envisioned in Monsignor Cristiani's book as in need of some kind of renewal.

It is the first purpose of this present article, however, to seek out and to state clearly in what ways the science of Catholic theology is open to change and to improvement. To achieve our objective, we have only to investigate the content of that portion of sacred doctrine that goes by the name of introduction to sacred theology.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 94.

RENEWAL AND IMPROVEMENT IN THEOLOGY

Is the science of sacred theology, as it is being taught in the Catholic Church here and now, capable of being transformed or improved?

When we or anyone else set out to discuss the science of sacred theology, we must take cognizance of the fact that we are dealing with a really existing discipline, set forth in a tremendously ample professional literature, taught professionally in seminaries and Catholic universities throughout the world, and subject to definite description and legislation by the *magisterium* of the Catholic Church. Hence, in replying to the question we have raised, it is imperative that we distinguish between the theses most commonly taught in the courses and the manuals of sacred theology, and the proofs and explanations of these theses presented in individual theological works and by individual lecturers.

Now as anyone can find out, by examining the content of current theological manuals in the field of fundamental dogmatic theology and special dogmatic theology, by far the greater number of the individual theses contained in such works are propositions which have been proposed in one way or another as authoritative and authentic Catholic doctrine by the *magisterium* of the Church. The center or the core of theological doctrine is composed of theses which have been taught and defined by the *magisterium* as dogmas of the Catholic faith. It is quite obvious that these teachings of the Catholic Church and of sacred theology are and will always remain completely true. There will never be and there can never be a time when the Church will understand or propose these dogmas of the faith with a meaning in any way different from the meaning which it always has recognized and ascribed to these doctrines.

Furthermore, it must be understood that these dogmas of the Catholic faith include not only doctrines proposed as such by the Church in its solemn judgments, but also those teachings set forth as dogmas in the ordinary and universal teaching activity of the true Church. And that ordinary and universal *magisterium* can be either that of all the Catholic residential bishops of the world united with the successor of St. Peter or the ordinary teaching work of the Roman Pontiff himself. Pope Pius XII made it abundantly clear that in the Holy Father's ordinary *magisterium,* as exercised

for instance in the writing of encyclical letters, "the words 'He that heareth you, heareth me,' are *also* verified."[10] It is difficult to see how he could have taught more directly or more effectively that the Roman Pontiff can teach *ex cathedra* in his ordinary teaching activities as well as in his solemn doctrinal pronouncements.[11]

Next, there are teachings which the Church infallibly proposes as certain without designating them as actually revealed. It is quite clear that these truths will never be abandoned by the Church and will never be rejected or modified in true Catholic theology. These truths fall within the secondary object of the Church's infallible *magisterium*. Ordinarily these truths, which directly or indirectly enter into the science of sacred theology, are taught by the Church in the course of its ordinary teaching activity.

And finally there are teachings which the Church proposes authoritatively but not infallibly. Within the field of Catholic doctrine there are definitely certain teachings which the Church orders its children to hold, but which the Church does not cover with the charism of doctrinal infallibility. It is, of course, possible that one or another of these teachings may be withdrawn by the ecclesiastical *magisterium*. When this happens the faithful are not bound in conscience to hold these teachings any more.

Even in this area, however, it is certain and obvious that any future action by the *magisterium*, declaring that the faithful are not obligated any longer to hold or to teach such a proposition, will in no way bring about any transformation of Catholic doctrine. Propositions of this type fall only within what might be called the penumbra of Catholic doctrine. There is no modification of Catholic doctrine as such when some detail, like the authenticity of an individual and non-essential text in the Vulgate, is dealt with differently in authoritative ecclesiastical documents emanating from different generations of churchmen.

Thus, to summarize: the teachings that are presented as the *central* and *basic* theses of the science of sacred theology are not

[10] The Latin text of the *Humani generis* is printed in *The American Ecclesiastical Review*, CXXIII (1950), 383-98. The words cited here are a translation of a passage found on p. 389.

[11] For a more complete treatment of this thesis cf. Fenton: "The *Humani generis* and the Holy Father's Ordinary *Magisterium*," in *AER*, CXXV (1951), 53-62.

going to be modified or renewed at all. No writer or teacher, even one many times more brilliant than Monsignor Cristiani's hero, is going to "breathe a new soul" into the Christian faith. The most that the greatest genius who ever will enter into the field of sacred theology can hope to do is to visualize these teachings more profoundly and clearly than his predecessors and contemporaries have generally done, and to express these truths more adequately and more effectively than other teachers.

THE POSSIBILITY OF ERROR

There is another aspect of this same subject. We may ask: has the Catholic Church itself taught the divinely revealed truths accurately and effectively up until this moment? The answer to this question is particularly important. And that answer must be given in the light of the most explicit teaching of the Church's *magisterium*. First there is this paragraph from the constitution *Dei Filius,* set forth by the First Ecumenical Council of the Vatican:

> For the doctrine of faith which God has revealed has not been proposed, like a philosophical invention, to be perfected by human ingenuity; but has been delivered as a divine deposit to the Spouse of Christ, to be guarded faithfully and to be taught infallibly. Hence there must also always be retained that meaning of the sacred dogmas which Holy Mother the Church has once declared, nor must that meaning ever be abandoned under the pretence or in the name of a more profound understanding. Then let the understanding, the science, and the wisdom of individuals and of all, of one man and of the entire Church, in all ages and at all times, grow and advance greatly and powerfully; but only in its own kind, that is in the same doctrine, with the same meaning, and with the same significance.[12]

This teaching of the *Dei Filius* is presented again clearly and explicitly in the Oath against Modernism, which was incorporated into the Motu proprio *Sacrorum antistitum:*

> Fourth, I sincerely accept the doctrine of faith passed down to us from the Apostles through the orthodox Fathers with the same meaning and always with the same significance; and consequently I utterly reject

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[12] *Denz.,* 1800.

the heretical fiction of an evolution of dogmas passing from one meaning to another different from that which the Church held previously; and I likewise condemn all error by which there is substituted for the divine deposit, entrusted to the Spouse of Christ to be guarded faithfully by her, a philosophical invention or a creation of human consciousness formulated little by little by the efforts of men to be perfected by an indefinite progress in the future.[13]

In the *Dei Filius* it is made clear that the meaning of the Church's revealed teaching always remains exactly the same, even though the Church itself, as well as the individual members of the Church, can and should advance in the knowledge and understanding of this teaching. Such an advance takes place in the Church's and the individual Catholic's grasp of revealed truth when, by prayerful study, the doctrines of the faith are compared with what man understands on the natural plane, and when the various revealed truths are visualized in relation to one another. And these processes are themselves allocated within the framework of what Pius IX and Pius XII called "the noblest work of theology," the task of showing that the truths defined by the Catholic *magisterium* are to be found in the sources of revelation with exactly the same meaning that they have in the pronouncements and the definitions of the teaching Church.[14] This work, in its turn, is frequently ordered to the manifestation of Catholic truth against attempts to misrepresent the teachings of the Catholic faith.

FAITH AND PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS

We come now to another, and a highly important question. We have seen Monsignor Cristiani's statement: "Something is happening which is analogous to the revolution of St. Thomas Aquinas assimilating Aristotelianism and incorporating it, not as it stood, but in its valid elements, into the heart of Christian doctrine. Teilhard wanted to be the Thomas Aquinas of our time."[15]

The question is: Can Catholic doctrine at any time be rightly considered as a *synthesis* made up of divine public revelation and

[13] *Denz.*, 2145.
[14] *Humani generis*, in *AER, loc. cit.*, p. 390. Also, *Denz.*, 1796.
[15] *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: His Life and Spirit*, p. 94.

some other elements, Aristotelianism in the time of St. Thomas Aquinas or evolutionistic science in the second half of the twentieth century?

The answer to this question is very clear, and is most important. Catholic doctrine, that is, the teaching set forth by the *magisterium* of the Catholic Church, is essentially the supernatural message which God has revealed through Jesus Christ. The answer is effectively indicated in the final sentence of the introduction to the First Vatican Council's constitution *Dei Filius:*

> And now, with the Bishops of the entire world gathered together in the Holy Ghost by Our authority in this Ecumenical Council assembled around Us and judging with Us, confiding in the word of God in Scripture and in tradition, as We have received it sacredly guarded and accurately expounded by the Catholic Church, We have determined from this chair of Peter, to profess and to declare the salutary doctrine of Christ in the sight of all men, proscribing and condemning, by the power given to Us by God, the errors opposed to it.[16]

What the First Vatican Council set out to teach, and what it really taught in this magnificent dogmatic constitution was and is "the salutary doctrine of Christ." Into the enunciation of that doctrine went all the culture and learning at the disposal of the Church's *magisterium.* Indeed, there are very few documents in all the history of the teaching Church that so clearly manifest a mastery of the science of philosophy as overpoweringly as does the constitution *Dei Filius.* Yet it is quite obvious that the chapters and the canons of this dogmatic constitution contain, not some combination of philosophical datum and Catholic doctrine, but definitely and only "the salutary doctrine of Christ."

This is confirmed in and by the most common and ordinary theological investigation. It is a commonplace of sacred theology that the primary object of the Church's infallible teaching power is the *content* of divine and supernatural public revelation, and that the secondary object of that same infallible *magisterium* is to be found in those truths which, though not revealed in themselves, are still so intimately connected with the revealed teaching that this revealed doctrine could not be proposed infallibly by a *living* and

[16] *Denz.,* 1781.

inerrant doctrinal authority unless that same doctrinal authority were empowered to teach infallibly with reference to these connected or secondary truths.

Thus, according to this thesis, the truths that enter into the secondary object of the Church's infallible teaching power are basically only *means* or *adjuncts* for the effective and accurate presentation of the divinely revealed dogma of the Catholic Church, insofar as these secondary truths are stated by the ecclesiastical *magisterium*. And the truths of philosophy, including those of the part called "natural philosophy," which are intimately connected with the divinely revealed message of the Church, fall within this category.

Thus it is quite inaccurate to teach or to infer that, in some way or another, scientific or philosophical knowledge ever has been or ever will be really *incorporated* "into the heart of Christian doctrine." And quite definitely Catholic doctrine is not, never has been, and never will be, a synthesis, composed of divine public revelation and philosophical knowledge or hypothesis. Actually the Catholic Church devotes all of its doctrinal resources and bends all of its efforts towards the clear and accurate presentation of God's revealed message to the little ones of Jesus Christ.

At this point it is important to note that what is true of Catholic doctrine is not true in the same way of the *culture* of the Catholic people. Philosophical or scientific culture differs from age to age and from region to region. The cultured Catholic will be aware, not only of the salvific teaching of Christ as this is proposed by his Church, but he will also be cognizant of scientific or philosophical truth in the degree in which this has developed in the age and the region in which he is living. To a certain extent, then, his culture or his education *will be* a synthesis of the teaching of his faith and the scientific or philosophical knowledge currently available to him. But it is most important to remember that Catholic doctrine itself is definitely not such a synthesis. And this brings us to another question, or rather to another aspect of our fundamental question.

FAITH AND SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

If scientific knowledge or scientific hypothesis do not enter "into the heart of Christian doctrine," then what is their connec-

tion with the teaching of the Catholic Church and with the science of sacred theology?

Here we must make a distinction. First of all the science of sacred theology, like the *magisterium* of the Catholic Church, uses or employs truths within the area of philosophy or of science for the more effective presentation and understanding of the mysteries of the faith themselves. Secondly, the *magisterium* and the science of sacred theology present divine public revelation as really and objectively true. That revealed message confronts and is confronted by what is and what only purports to be the truth of science and of philosophy at every age.

With reference to the first of these connections of naturally ascertainable scientific truth with the mysteries of the divine faith, the following citation from the constitution *Dei Filius* is most enlightening. It has to do with the use of naturally known truths, and therefore the truths actually known in and through human science and philosophy, in gaining a fruitful understanding of the mysteries of divine faith:

> When reason, enlightened by faith, seeks carefully, piously, and soberly as a gift from God, some understanding of the mysteries, it attains that understanding, and attains it as a most fruitful gift, both from an analogy with those things which it knows naturally, and from the connection of the mysteries among themselves and with the last end of man.[17]

It is definitely along these two lines that advance in theological penetration of the mysteries has taken place during the history of the Catholic Church. Here, however, we are concerned only with the advance in theological insight which is brought about through a comparison between the teachings proposed by the Church as divine public revelation and the truths which the mind can rightly accept as objectively certain doctrines within the purely natural order.

Ordinarily at least such "analogy" between the truths of the faith and naturally observable or scientific facts results in the enrichment of the vocabulary of sacred theology and of Catholic dogma. Perhaps the best example of this process is to be found in

[17] *Denz.*, 1796.

the introduction of the word "person" into the Catholic doctrine about the Blessed Trinity.

This term "person" is not applied to the Father, or to the Son, or to the Holy Ghost, in any of the books of Scripture or in any of the earlier monuments of divine apostolic tradition. Yet, after the violent danger that came to the faith of Catholics through Arianism, when the teachers of God's truth revealed message came to examine this word, they found that, purified, it could be properly applied to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, in such a way that the original teaching set forth in Scripture and in divine apostolic tradition, and proposed as dogma by the true Church, could be accurately and effectively expressed by saying that, in the ineffable unity of the Godhead, there subsist three distinct, co-equal, and consubstantial Persons.

This comparison between the revealed teaching and the philosophical and juridical teachings in which the meaning of personality was originally conveyed in no way brought about a synthesis of Catholic dogma and these disciplines of the purely natural order. The *doctrine* about the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost was exactly the same in itself and as it was proposed and understood by the Church before the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost were called Divine Persons; and this remained equally true even after that designation was employed, even in the authoritative pronouncements of the Catholic *magisterium*. No new element was added to the original teaching. All that happened was that the Church itself and the individual members of the Church came to have a more profound understanding of the actual doctrine about the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost which had been proposed in Scripture and in divine apostolic tradition, and which had been proposed as divinely revealed by the Church from the very beginning. In this way, scientific knowledge in the natural order constitutes a means employed by the Church and by the science of sacred theology for the further and more profound understanding of and clarification of Christian revelation.

But there is still another way in which scientific knowledge comes into contact with Catholic doctrine. Actually the Catholic faith and the natural sciences are, considered subjectively, two intellectual virtues which can and should coexist in the same subject. And because the Catholic Church is a *living* teaching agency, with

a message it presents as objectively and actually true, its teachings confront and are confronted by doctrines which are proposed as scientific conclusions. The statements of the *Dei Filius* with reference to that confrontation are among the most interesting and the most challenging in all Catholic history. And it must not be forgotten that these statements form a part of the teaching that the Council itself designated as "the salutary doctrine of Christ." Thus we read:

> But although faith is above reason, there can never be any real discrepancy between faith and reason; since the same God who reveals the mysteries and infuses the faith has bestowed the light of reason on the human mind, and God cannot deny Himself nor can truth ever contradict truth. The false appearance of such a contradiction is mainly due, either to the dogmas of the faith not having been understood and expounded according to the mind of the Church, or to the fictions of opinion having been taken for the verdicts of reason. We define, therefore, that every assertion contrary to a truth of enlightened faith is utterly false.
>
> Further the Church which has received, together with the apostolic duty of teaching, the commission to guard the deposit of faith, derives from God the right and the duty to proscribe what is falsely called science, lest any should be deceived by philosophy and vain fallacy. For this reason all the Christian faithful are not only forbidden to defend as legitimate conclusions of science such opinions as are known to be contrary to the doctrines of the faith, especially if these opinions have been condemned by the Church, but are absolutely bound to account them as errors which put on the false appearance of truth.
>
> And not only can faith and reason never be opposed to one another, but they are of mutual aid to one another; for right reason demonstrates the foundations of the faith and, illumined by the light of faith, it cultivates the science of things divine. And the faith frees and protects reason from errors, and furnishes it with manifold knowledge.[18]

So it is that, according to the teachings of the *Dei Filius*, the confrontation of the Catholic faith with the truths arrived at by the use of reason results in benefits to the life of faith and to the world of natural science as well. No genuinely true scientific teaching can ever in any way be opposed to the teachings which the

[18] *Denz.*, 1797 ff.

Catholic Church teaches as divinely revealed. Where people try to make it appear that such opposition exists, the apparent opposition is usually due either to a misinterpretation of the dogma in question or to the tactic of representing some unsupported opinion as a scientifically verified fact.

It should also be clear that this confrontation must necessarily affect the presentation of Catholic doctrine and the study of sacred theology. It is quite clear that this influence will in no way result in any change inthe meaning of the divinely revealed truths. But it will bring about the constant and effective effort to state the truths of divine faith in terms that will be intelligible to the present world of science. When the *magisterium* of the Catholic Church issues the bold and enduring challenge: "We define, therefore, that every assertion contrary to a truth of enlightened faith is utterly false," it makes that statement in the open forum of the world. And the men who are commissioned to teach and to defend the divinely revealed message can and should prepare themselves to back up that challenge. And they cannot do this work unless they take cognizance of the actual difficulties that are being urged, in their time, against Catholic dogma in the name of science and of philosophy.

THEOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENT

Granted that both the principles and the central and certain teachings of the science of sacred theology cannot be transformed or passed over, but that these doctrines can be understood more profoundly and clearly as time passes on, we come to the question of actual theological instruction and of theological writing. There can, of course, be no question about the possibility of and the need for constant and serious improvement along these lines. The man who is not aware of such a need would be a poor-spirited theologian indeed.

But the very serious question arises: exactly what kind of improvement is needed in the fields of theological teaching and writing? Is this improvement to be so radical that the man who begins to bring it about will look like a "prophet," and the man who prepares the way for it will be a "precursor," to use the terms applied to Father Teilhard by Monsignor Cristiani? Will the

improved theological instruction and writing of the future be something that differs completely from the kind of theology that is found in most of our commonly used seminary manuals of theological instruction?

All of the very clear evidence available in the science of sacred theology demands that these last two questions be answered in the negative.

The fact of the matter is that theology is, has been, and will remain, one and the same science. It is now and it always will be definable as the *scientia fidei*. Its function is and always will be that of seeking the *intelligentia mysteriorum*. And what Pius IX and Pius XII called "the most noble office of theology" is and will remain always "to show how a doctrine defined by the Church is contained in the sources of revelation . . . in that sense in which it has been defined by the Church."[19]

Thus, precisely because sacred theology is and will remain the same science, with the same essential function and the same primary objective, the needed improvement in theological instruction and theological literature will not involve any radical or substantial change in the constitution of the science itself. The theological treatises of the past centuries are readable to the theological students of our time, and extremely helpful to them. And it is quite obvious that the well-written theological books and articles of our time will be meaningful and helpful to students of Catholic theology as long as there is a study of sacred theology in this world. This will remain true regardless of what conquests may be made in the fields of science and of technology during the years and the ages to come.

But definitely there should be and there must be an improvement in theology within the lines of its present and constant framework. This improvement is necessarily to be found in a more accurate and adequately clear statement of the truths defined and taught by the ecclesiastical *magisterium*. And it will necessarily involve a more serious effort to show *how* these pronouncements and definitions of the teaching Church are actually contained in the sources of revelation in exactly the same sense and with exactly

[19] *Humani generis*, in *AER*, *loc. cit.*

the same meaning as they bear in the authoritative doctrinal statements of the Church's apostolic college. Essentially, then, advance in the field of sacred theology centers around a clarification of the thesis presented and defended by the theologian, and around a perfection of the theological proofs offered in support of that thesis.

Those who are in any way interested in a critical study of theological literature, and particularly in the history of scholastic theology, are well aware of this need. Thus, to take merely one example, Father King's study of the treatment given the doctrine of the Catholic Church's necessity for the attainment of eternal salvation in well over two hundred and fifty theological writers of the past century has focussed the minds of contemporary scholars on the weakness of the explanation or even the statement of this thesis in far too many recent Catholic writings.[20] And, as anyone who has tried to use some theological manuals as classroom texts knows very well, far too many of the "proofs" alleged in support of theses in such manuals actually lack all demonstrative power. Furthermore, the same weaknesses manifest in the manual or textbook literature of sacred theology are all too frequently present in much more specialized studies.

NEW TERMINOLOGY?

Will the terminology of sacred theology have to be changed? Will the theologians of the future study a science that is couched more in the vocabulary of Father Teilhard than, let us say, of Cardinal Billot, Cajetan, or St. Thomas Aquinas?

We may be sure that they will not. We should recall the words of Pope Pius XII in his encyclical *Humani generis:* "Contempt for terms and notions habitually used by scholastic theologians leads of itself to the weakening of what is known as speculative theology."[21] The terminology hitherto employed in the science of sacred theology has been fashioned and perfected over the course of the centuries by the most brilliant minds God has given to His

[20] Cf. John J. King, O.M.I., *The Necessity of the Church for Salvation in Selected Theological Writings of the Past Century* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1960).

[21] *Humani generis*, in *AER, loc. cit.*, p. 388.

Church. It is, as a unit, uniquely adapted to the expression of the truths taught in the sacred science. And, while occasionally some term may come to have a new and common meaning, and hence may be less fitted for the expression of the old theological truth, and while new terms will undoubtedly be added to the vocabulary of theology from time to time, as new works have been added to that vocabulary over the course of the centuries, the terminology itself will not change substantially.

Young students of sacred theology will do well to take cognizance of the fact that, in the writings of many of these "new theologians," the novel and sometimes very impressive terminology employed is all too frequently highly figurative in nature. Of course, we realize that every term which is applied to God and to man is used analogically. Yet we must likewise pay attention to the fact that there are two kinds of analogy, proper and metaphorical. The tendency in these new "precursors" and "prophets" who are currently making so much of a fracas in the world of sacred theology is to utilize an entirely metaphorical terminology, and, indeed, to replace perfectly familiar proper terms with words and expressions of a definitely figurative character.

Actually, true progress in the field of sacred theology goes in exactly the opposite direction. We advance in the understanding of the revealed mysteries when we are able to state in proper terms truths which are ordinarily couched in figurative language. On the other hand, to turn from clarity and effectiveness in the direction of vagueness and confusion is to harm, rather than to aid, in the process of theological investigation.

A NEW THOMAS?

Is there room for another St. Thomas Aquinas in the field of sacred theology?

In order to answer this question properly, we must first make sure that we understand the exact nature of the contribution St. Thomas made to the science of sacred theology.

The great contribution of St. Thomas is to be found in this alone: that he set down in uniquely and intricately ordered detail an accurate and clear statement of what the Church had always

taught and held about its own divine message; and that he was eminently successful in showing how the basic points of Catholic doctrine are to be found in the sources of divine public revelation. It is for this reason, and for no other, that he is the *Doctor Communis* of the Catholic Church. And it is likewise for this reason that even the most brilliant and effective theologians that come after St. Thomas during the course of the centuries must teach theology within the framework of his contributions.

Definitely, then, St. Thomas Aquinas is not the great Doctor of the Catholic Church because it has been customary to follow his theology; nor because he managed most effectively to utilize the resources of Aristotelian thought in the statement of Catholic doctrine; nor because he was most forcefully in accord with the spirit of his time; nor, finally, because his writings have been particularly helpful in the dissemination of Catholic doctrine. He owes his doctrinal position in the Church to the fact that he did the work of a theologian exceptionally, even uniquely, well. And anyone who may ever be thought of seriously as another St. Thomas will be a man who has in some way done the same thing for his own generation.

There is, however, little likelihood that any one man will ever deserve this designation. It was the glory of St. Thomas that he was a master of the entire content of sacred theology. The gigantic advancement of this science in our own day, with the concomitant necessity for specialization in the field of theology, renders it definitely improbable that any one man will ever have such a mastery of the entire science again.

There can be no question about the fact that theology will progress admirably even further. The divine indwelling within the Church of Christ the Teacher will assure this progress. And it seems most likely that much of this advance will come in the field of fundamental dogmatic theology. Individuals will, of course, contribute to this advance. But, in the last analysis, any future advancement to theology that is in any way commensurate to that brought about by St. Thomas Aquinas will be the work, not of an individual writer or teacher, but of the theologians of the Church as a group, acting under the high direction of the Roman Pontiff.

ROME AND THE THEOLOGIAN

Much of Monsignor Cristiani's uneasiness about the nature and the status of present day theology seems to be connected with his rather odd notion about the position of Rome with regard to the individual theologian. This notion is expressed in the following passage of his book about Father Teilhard:

> He sent this essay [*Comment je crois*] to two of his friends, who were enthusiastic about it. At Lyon, Père Auguste Valensin (who had a philosopher's mind if ever there was one) called it "magisterial." That was what Mgr. Bruno de Solages thought too. It was, we remember, exactly what they said at Louvain about his *Milieu divin*. It had, however, to overcome the wise procrastination of Rome. At Rome, in fact, they have to do something like what they do with sea convoys in war-time. In convoys, the swifter vessels have to adapt their speed to that of the slower ones. The Church does not want to prevent eagles from soaring high and looking right into the sun. But she also has to protect the humblest of sparrows and prevent them from being frightened. Père Teilhard knew too that *time* is necessary for the evolution of ideas, and that, as St. Vincent de Paul said, one should not "run ahead of Providence." For himself, however, he believed he had always to go right in front.[22]

Through this maze of mixed figures of speech, Monsignor Cristiani offers us a disturbingly inadequate teaching about the relation of the Catholic theologian to the ecclesiastical *magisterium*. He sees the most effective and brilliant teachers of Catholic doctrine as in some way advancing while a cautious Roman See is prepared to hold them back for fear that they would present teachings for which their fellow Catholics are not as yet prepared. And from this unfounded belief, he attempts to explain why it was that the Holy See withheld its approbation from *Comment je crois*.

Monsignor Cristiani quotes from one of Father Teilhard's letters, giving a part of the author's own explanation of this little work:

> It is a study of the successive development of a *credo* which, from faith to faith, converges towards and joins up with the Christian current (or *phylum*). Faith in the World, Faith in the Spirit in the World,

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[22] *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: His Life and Spirit*, pp. 50 f.

Faith in the immortality of the Spirit in the World, Faith in the expanding personalization of the World. I fancy I have a better hold now than a year ago on views which enable me to believe in this seriously.[23]

If Father Teilhard's description of his own essay was in any way objective, then it is very easy indeed to see why Rome was very wise indeed in not granting permission that this essay be published.

PARTICULAR QUESTIONS

But there are still three questions that must be considered here. The first is this: Why does Rome actually withhold permission for the publication of books on topics within the area of dogmatic theology?

There are, of course, times when, by an action that is primarily *disciplinary* rather than doctrinal, the Church refuses to allow some opinion to be taught in its schools because, in the judgment of the Church authorities, the evidence adduced to support that opinion does not seem to be adequate. It has happened that, after the passage of time, and after new and sufficient evidence has been brought forward, the Church has allowed or even encouraged such opinions in its schools.

It must be remembered that the Church acts thus only within the area of opinions, only where there has been no infallible decision of the *magisterium* on this particular point in the past. And opinions of this sort have been found occasionally in the realm of teaching about the authenticity or the interpretation of some scriptural text.

On the other hand, where there is a question of some teaching which has been defined or proposed as such by the infallible Catholic *magisterium,* the Church does not act in this way at all. When it refuses to allow the publication of some writing, or goes so far as to condemn it or to order it withdrawn from sale, it acts in this way because it realizes that the teaching set forth by the writer is either erroneous or ineptly ambiguous. The Church definitely and justly considers as inept any writings which would, by the vague-

[23] *Ibid.,* p. 50.

ness of their terminology, lead the gullible to imagine that what has been considered as Catholic doctrine and as Catholic theology up to this point should now be abandoned in favor of some other type of teaching.

The Church does not withhold its approval from books because their authors have caught some glimpse of religious reality over and above that which is granted to the other members of the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ. It approves and encourages those who do good work in their chosen fields of Christian doctrine and of Catholic theology.

The second of the questions prompted by the passage from Monsignor Cristiani's book may be phrased thus: Is there now or will there ever be available through study, that is, by way of the essentially theological process, any grasp of religious truth by which the ordinary Catholic theologian, or for that matter, the ordinary Catholic, will be "frightened"?

It is absolutely essential that every student of sacred theology realize that a negative answer must be given to this question. Catholic theology and Catholic doctrine are definitely not like some esoteric teachings handed out in the various degrees of freemasonry. There is no shocking surprise that a man will meet at the end of a lifetime of study of the sacred science. What the greatest masters of theology, men like St. Thomas and Francis Sylvius, possessed at the end of a lifetime of study and meditation was only a more profound, and a more orderly, and a clearer, understanding of the truths of divine faith which they had accepted as certain from the very beginning.

But what they had learned, and what all the great contemplatives during the lifetime of the Church have learned through the operation of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, is not something which would be frightening to the little ones of Christ, but rather a foretaste of that great understanding which is the Beatific Vision.

It was most unfortunate and most careless of Monsignor Cristiani to assert that his hero had attained a grasp of the reality described in divine public revelation which would be "frightening" to the ordinary run of his fellow Catholics. And it was still more unfortunate that he ascribed Rome's unwillingness to approve some of his hero's writing to what he regarded as the hero's higher vision of religious truth.

Finally, we come to the third and last question: Is a writer, especially a Catholic writer, who deals with matters that fall within the sphere of Catholic theology, to be complimented or praised because he has shown what is considered to be great intellectual virtuosity or an inter-galactic mentality in the process of offering a teaching at variance with that of the Catholic *magisterium?*

Practically speaking, this is one of the most important questions any Catholic scholar can ask himself today. And it is important precisely because of the basic and sometimes forgotten truth inherent in the correct answer to that question.

The answer is, of course, that the kind of writer described in the question will not be praised by any person who actually appreciates the content of Catholic doctrine. The man who is convinced and certain that the statements taught by the Church as Catholic dogma are actually true, and that they form a part of a supernatural message which God has given to us through Our Lord, the Great Prophet, will definitely not applaud a man for denying or misrepresenting those statements. He may feel sorry for such an individual. He may point to extenuating circumstances, and plead that when or where the offending writer lived he had no opportunity to receive the teachings of the Catholic faith in all of their purity from the Catholic *magisterium,* or at least to have available to him authoritative documents of the *magisterium* which would show him the faulty character of his own writings. But definitely the man who accepts Catholic doctrine whole-heartedly and loves it for what it is will not praise a fellow Catholic for having misconstrued it. He will not feel that any denial of the doctrine of Jesus Christ the Teacher "has a certain grandeur."

This, it seems to me, is the most important lesson to be derived from a consideration of what Monsignor Cristiani has had to say in this book. The Catholic who truly appreciates or who tries to appreciate the teaching of his Church is definitely not going to look for some future super-theology about a super-Christ. And very definitely he is not going to adopt an attitude of reverential awe towards a writer whose productions are in some measure at least divergent from the doctrine of the Church. In the final analysis, the lesson given us by Monsignor Cristiani's book is that of the

necessity of an ever greater study of and affection for the doctrine we receive from Christ through His Church.

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FIFTY YEARS AGO

The leading article in *The American Ecclesiastical Review* for December, 1910, is entitled "Forbid them not." The author, Fr. C. A. Shyne, S.J., argues that children of seven or eight years should be admitted to First Communion. The most interesting feature of this article, we are informed in a footnote, is that it was written before the *Quam singulari* of August 8, 1910, the Roman decree setting the age for First Communion as the time of the attainment of the use of reason, usually about the age of seven. . . . An anonymous article entitled "The Odds against Oratory" asserts that the priest, because of the exactness and precision of the metaphysical and theological truths he must preach, is hampered in his attempt to become an orator. The author says: "I do not say that a metaphysician cannot be an orator, but in the great majority of cases, on account of the difficulty of uniting opposites, he will not be; and his metaphysics, without which pulpit oratory must of necessity be a sham, almost to a certainty dissipates that very oratory." . . . Miss Helene Stummel, writing from Germany on "The Alb," narrates the development of this vestment from ancient to modern times. She opposes the use of lace in the making of the alb. . . . Very Rev. Peter Meagher of New South Wales, continuing his series of articles on "The Sacred Scriptures on Mixed Marriages," develops the passage in *II Corinthians* (6:14—7:1) in which the Apostle exhorts the early Christians not to bear the yoke with unbelievers. . . . Fr. E. Gibbons (now the retired Bishop of Albany) writes on the teaching of Christian doctrine. He says, speaking of the ideal condition: "The pastor goes regularly and as often as he can to the class-room and with the teacher as one of his auditors, supplements his or her work with his wider knowledge, his stronger personality, and the inestimable power of his pastorship and canonical mission.". . . In the Analecta we find the second half of the Motu proprio *Sacrorum Antistitum* against Modernism. . . . In the Studies and Conferences section there is a commentary (anonymous) on the recent papal prohibition against the reading of even religious periodicals by seminarians. . . . There is also a discussion on the power of a bishop to dispense from fast and abstinence.

F. J. C.

Answers to Questions

DO WE WISH TO CONVERT ALL AMERICANS?

Question: A popular magazine recently carried an article (apparently by a Catholic) on the religious issue in American politics. On the whole, it was a fair account of the hostility to the Catholic Church that has been manifested in various forms in the course of our national life—suspicions, charges of disloyalty and even physical violence. However, the author denounces Archbishop Hughes of New York as an Irish Catholic fanatic, because he declared it to be the Church's divine mission "to convert all pagan nations and all Protestant nations . . . to convert the world, including the inhabitants of the United States." Why should this statement be regarded as fanatical?

Answer: The only answer I can give is that the author is not familiar with the teaching of the Catholic Church on its own divinely ordained mission. Certainly, anyone who would contradict the statement of Archbishop Hughes would express heresy. For it is an article of Catholic faith that the Catholic Church received from Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the authority and the obligation to attempt to convert everyone in the world to Catholicism. In the words of Pope Leo XIII, writing on the oneness of the Catholic Church: "The Church must lavish on all men and proclaim to all ages the salvation begotten by Jesus Christ and all the benefits which flow therefrom. Hence, by the will of its Author there should be one Church in all lands for all time" (*Denz.* 1955). And the Code of Canon Law states: "The Church has the right and the duty of teaching the evangelical doctrine to all nations, independently of every civil power; and all are bound by divine law to learn this doctrine and to embrace the true Church of God" (Can. 1322, § 2). This is only the exercise of the mission which Christ assigned to the apostles when He bade them to preach the Gospel to every creature (*Mark* 16:16), and an attempt to fulfill His desire that there shall be "one fold and one shepherd" and that "all may be one" (*John* 10:16-17, 21).

Of course, this does not mean that the Church approves of any form of coercion. Pope Leo XIII clearly stated this in the En-

cyclical *Immortale Dei:* "The Church is accustomed to take very great care that no one shall be unwillingly forced to embrace the Catholic faith" (*Denz.* 1875).

The Church believes that cogent arguments, adapted to the intelligence of all men, can be given to prove that the teachings of Catholic faith can and must be reasonably accepted by all as the message of God to the entire human race (*Denz.* 1790). Those who decide to investigate the claims of the Church are also urged to pray for divine light and guidance. Many do come into the Church after such an investigation and petition; others refuse to hear the Church's arguments, or reject them. The Church does not pass judgment on these latter nor punish them. Only God can judge who are in good faith, who in bad faith. Nevertheless, the Church believes that objectively there is an obligation on all to become Catholics and to live up to this in practice.

Despite her wish that all become Catholics, the Church will not admit to her membership any adult (a person who has attained the use of reason) who is not certain that the Catholic Church is the only true, divinely established religious organization in the world. One who would seek to be admitted to membership without this attitude could not be received as a convert. At the same time, the Church does not hesitate to stand before the world and declare that she is striving to convert all men by logic and prayer. If this attitude be denounced as fanaticism, then the Catholic Church has been fanatical since the day when Jesus Christ bade the apostles to make disciples of all nations (*Matt.* 28:19).

THE FREEDOM OF THE ACT OF FAITH

Question: We frequently hear the statement that the act of faith is free, and the words of Pope Leo XIII are repeated in favor of this principle: "A man cannot believe unless he is willing" (*Denz.* 1875). How is this principle to be understood? Does it mean that a person is free to believe or not to believe in the Catholic religion?

Answer: To understand what we mean when we say that the act of faith is free, we must distinguish between *physical* freedom and *moral* freedom. Physical freedom means that a person *can* do something; moral freedom means that a person *may* do something. A person is physically free to perform an act when he possesses the ability of will and of activity to do it or not to do it. A person

is morally free to perform an act when, without committing sin, he may do it or not do it. Thus, a Catholic in good health living near a church possesses the physical freedom to go to Mass or to stay home, and on a week day he has also the moral freedom to stay away. But on a Sunday he is not morally free to omit Mass (apart from an excusing cause or a dispensation), despite his physical freedom.

A person is *physically* free to make an act of faith or not to make it. For the act of faith is an internal act, performed under the impulse of grace and elicited by the intellect at the command of the will. Hence, no human being can coerce anyone into making an act of faith, for any violence applied to one human being on another can of itself succeed only in forcing the latter to perform external bodily actions. The practical conclusion drawn by Pope Leo XIII in the passage cited by our questioner is: "The Church is wont to take the greatest care that no one be forced unwillingly to embrace the Catholic faith."

But the act of faith in the case of an adult (one who has attained the age of reason) is not *morally* free. In other words, everyone possessing the use of reason is bound, by necessity of means in order to attain sanctification and salvation, to make an act of faith, as the initial step in the supernatural life. This is the meaning of Our Lord's words: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned" (*Mark* 16:16) Again, the Epistle to the Hebrews states: ". . . without faith it is impossible to please God" (*Hebrews* 11:6). This does not mean that a person must, by necessity of means, believe *explicitly* all that God has revealed; but one must believe explicitly at least the existence of God and the fact that He rewards the good and punishes the evil, and perhaps also the mysteries of the Holy Trinity and the Incarnation. And, at least in his general will to accept all that God has revealed, he must implicitly believe all the other truths of revelation.

It is important in speaking about the freedom of the act of faith that one make this distinction between physical and moral freedom. Otherwise the impression might be given that everyone is *allowed* to believe or not to believe the message of salvation proclaimed by Jesus Christ for all mankind and committed to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church.

MASS WITHOUT A CHALICE

Question: A priest has travelled a long way to say Mass on Sunday at a mission station. When assembling the equipment for the Holy Sacrifice, he finds to his dismay that he has forgotten to bring a chalice. It would involve two or three hours' delay to procure a chalice from his parish church. In such a case would it be permissible for him to use a ciborium, or even a drinking glass in place of a chalice?

Answer: Per se, a consecrated chalice must be used in the celebration of Mass, and this obligation binds *sub gravi.* If there were question of a private Mass of devotion, a priest would be bound under pain of mortal sin to abstain from celebrating rather than use a substitute for a chalice or even an unconsecrated chalice. However, there can be times when a priest could celebrate Mass without a consecrated chalice. As Regatillo-Zalba say: "It is a grave sin to celebrate Mass without a gilded chalice and paten, that have not been consecrated *except for a very grave and urgent necessity* (*Theologiae moralis summa,* III, n. 150). I believe that the case presented by our questioner would constitute such a grave and urgent necessity. For, certainly, if a priest arrived at a mission chapel where the people were assembled for Mass, and then failed to offer the Holy Sacrifice, he would give considerable scandal. There would be many complaints and perhaps suspicions about his moral integrity. For some it might even be the occasion of leaving the Church. Hence, in the situation visualized, I believe that the priest should offer Mass, using in place of the chalice a ciborium, if one is available, and otherwise a drinking glass (which should be well purified, or even broken afterward so that it can no longer be used for ordinary purposes). If he uses a glass, he should explain to the people why this is being done, in order to avert any surprise or scandal. If he uses a ciborium, I do not believe that any explanation is required, because, on account of its similarity to a chalice, there would be no surprise.

It might be well to add a word about a substitute for a paten, which normally would be lacking when the chalice has been forgotten. I believe that the best substitute in such an emergency would be a folded corporal or a pall.

FRANCIS J. CONNELL, C.SS.R.

THE NEW RUBRICS FOR THE DIVINE OFFICE

By the time these words appear in print it is most likely that a translation of the Motu Proprio of Pope John XXIII, *Rubricarum instructum* (*AAS,* LII [1960], 593-740), together with the new code of rubrics thereby promulgated will have become generally available. It would therefore be pointless to try to give all the small details of the new code, especially when they represent changes concerning only a few special days. But, in view of the fact that the new legislation specifically forbids the sale of the new editions of the breviary and missal before December 20, 1960, very many priests will be obliged to start the new year with outmoded books. We shall therefore try to give what help we can, in the space available to us, to facilitate the adapting of the current breviary to the new code. We had hoped to treat the Mass as well as the Office, but the limitations of space oblige us to postpone the discussion of the missal changes.

In general, the changes occur within the pattern of our present books; adjustment will most often be made by way of omission.

VARIOUS KINDS OF LITURGICAL DAY

Liturgical days may be a Sunday, feria, vigil, feast, or octave day. Under another aspect, they are ranked as of the first, second, third, or fourth class. The word "double" follows "semidouble" into oblivion. The classification by number is of special importance, apart from questions of precedence, for the ordering of one's daily Office.

1. *Sundays* are divided into two classes. The Sundays of Advent, Lent and Passiontide, Easter, Low Sunday, and Pentecost make up the First Class; all other Sundays are of the Second Class. A First Class Sunday takes precedence over any occurring feast (an exception is made for the feast of the Immaculate Conception in Advent). A Second Class Sunday takes precedence over occurring *feasts* of the Second Class (except Second Class feasts of our Lord); it also displaces the Commemoration of All Souls.

Thus, the feast of the Holy Name takes precedence over a Sunday which occurs between January 2 and 5 (if no Sunday occurs,

then the feast is observed on January 2, as it will be in 1961). Likewise, the feast of the Holy Family takes precedence over the Sunday after Epiphany, but with this new detail, that there will be no commemoration of the Sunday. Neither will there be a commemoration of the Sunday on the feast of the Blessed Trinity or of Christ the King, both of which retain their place on Sundays.

2. *Ferias* are found in all four classes. Ferias of the First Class are: Ash Wednesday and all the ferias of Holy Week. They take precedence over *all* feasts and admit no commemoration except a single privileged one.

Second Class ferias are: ferias of Advent from December 17 to 23; the Ember Days of Advent, Lent, and September. These ferias take precedence over Second Class *feasts;* if they are impeded, they are commemorated.

Ferias of the Third Class are: those of Lent and Passiontide, from the Thursday after Ash Wednesday to the Saturday before Palm Sunday (they take precedence over Third Class *feasts*); and the ferias of Advent to December 16 incl. (they *yield* to Third Class feasts). If these ferias are impeded, they are commemorated.

All other ferias not listed belong to the Fourth Class; they are never commemorated when impeded.

3. *Vigils* fall into three classes, the first of which comprises the vigil of Christmas (which displaces an occurring IV Sunday of Advent, with no commemoration of the Sunday), and the vigil of Pentecost. These two take precedence over any feast and admit *no* commemoration.

In the Second Class are: the vigils of the Ascension, the Assumption, the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, and Sts. Peter and Paul. They take precedence over liturgical days of the *Third* and *Fourth Class* and are commemorated when impeded.

The sole vigil in the Third Class is that of St. Lawrence, which takes precedence over Fourth Class days and is commemorated when impeded.

The Paschal Vigil is an aliturgical day and is not classified. Second and Third Class vigils are *omitted* if they fall on a Sunday or First Class feast, or if the feast which they introduce is transferred or reduced to a commemoration.

4. *Feasts* have a threefold classification. In the First Class are those feasts which are at present known as "doubles of the First Class," plus the octave day of Christmas (Jan. 1) and the Commemoration of All Souls.

Second Class feasts are those which are now called "doubles of the Second Class," plus the feasts of the Holy Family, of the Chair of St. Peter the Apostle (Feb. 22), and of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

The Third Class comprises the former greater doubles, the lesser doubles (or simply "doubles," as they were called), and the old semidoubles.

There is a fourth grouping in which we find the pre-1955 simples; these will henceforth be known as "commemorations." Also reduced to this state will be ten feasts: St. George (April 23), B.V.M. of Mt. Carmel (July 16). St. Alexius (July 17), Sts. Cyriacus, etc. (Aug. 8), Stigmata of St. Francis (Sept. 17), Sts. Eustachius, etc. (Sept. 20), Our Lady of Ransom (Sept. 24), St. Thomas à Becket (Dec. 29), St. Sylvester I (Dec. 31), Seven Dolors of B.V.M. in Passiontide.

Eight feasts will be dropped entirely from the calendar: Chair of St. Peter at Rome (Jan. 18), Finding of the Holy Cross (May 3), St. John before the Latin Gate (May 6), Apparition of St. Michael (May 8), St. Leo II (July 3), St. Anacletus (July 13), St. Peter in Chains (Aug. 1), Finding of St. Stephen (Aug. 3).

St. Irenaeus moves from June 28 to July 3; the Curé d'Ars from Aug. 9 to Aug. 8. The commemoration of St. Vitalis is dropped (April 28), and the commemoration of Sts. Sergius, etc. is transferred from Oct. 7 to 8. Besides the feast of the Commemoration of the Baptism of Christ, so named since 1955, two new ones are added: St. Gregory Barbadici (June 17) and St. Anthony Mary Claret (Oct. 23).

5. *Octaves* are divided into two classes. Easter and Pentecost have octaves of the First Class and ***all*** the days within these octaves are of the First Class.

The octave of Christmas is the sole Second Class octave; its *octave day* is a First Class feast and the days between are of the Second Class.

RECITING THE DIVINE OFFICE

In addition to the change in the classification of feasts, Sundays, etc., there are also a number of things mentioned in the new legislation which affect the manner in which the Office is now to be recited.

1. *Time for reciting the canonical hours.*

Although the obligation of reciting the Office is satisfied if all the hours are said within the twenty-four hours of the day, the new code stresses the desirability of reciting each hour at its "true" time. Matins alone may be anticipated for a just reason, but not earlier than 2:00 p.m. Current privileges of earlier anticipation are revoked (*AAS*, LII [1960], 594).

Lauds, emphasized as "morning prayer," are to be said in the early morning if in choir or in common (i.e. by two or more together); the code adds that it is suitable to observe this practice in private recitation. Obviously, although the private recitation of Lauds may be at a time other than the early morning, this hour may no longer be anticipated.

Vespers are to be said in the afternoon even during Lent and Passiontide by those who recite the Office in choir or in common; and again the practice is recommended for private recitation.

It is further strongly recommended that Compline, for all those obligated, be recited as night prayer, even though the Matins of the following day has already been anticipated. In this event, one may make an examination of conscience of reasonable length instead of reciting the *Pater* which follows the *Adiutorium nostrum*.

2. *General arrangement of Matins.*

Matins consists of three Nocturns (with nine psalms and nine lessons) on *(a)* feasts of the First and Second Class; *(b)* ferias of the *Sacrum Triduum; (c)* octave day of Christmas; *(d)* All Souls Day.

Matins consists of one Nocturn (with nine psalms and three lessons) on *(a)* all Sundays except Easter and Pentecost, which retain throughout their octaves the present three psalms and three lessons; *(b)* all ferias, except those of the *Sacrum Triduum; (c)* all vigils; *(d)* feasts of the Third Class; *(e)* days within the octave of Christmas; *(f)* B.V.M. *in sabbato*.

3. *Classification and arrangement of the Office.*

There are also a number of changes that have been introduced in regard to the prayers of the Office, or the manner in which the Office is to be recited on days of different liturgical rank.

(a) Sunday Office

i. First Vespers and Compline: as at present. However, here, as elsewhere, in private recitation, *Dominus vobiscum,* etc. is replaced by *Domine, exaudi,* etc. (back to the days of subdiaconate!); remember also the examination of conscience at Compline.

ii. Matins: invitatorium and hymn as at present; antiphons, psalms, and verse read as one Nocturn; absolution *Exaudi;* blessings *Ille nos, Divinum auxilium, Per evangelica dicta.*

First and second lessons, with their responsories, from the occurring Scripture (but note that the *second* lesson is made up of the second *and* third lessons in your present breviary, with the omission of the intervening responsory); the third lesson is from the homily on the Gospel (the *first* lesson of the former third Nocturn, i.e. No. 7).

Te Deum, said or omitted according to present usage. When the *Te Deum* is omitted, the third responsory of the former third Nocturn is to be used, not the responsory following lesson No. 7.

iii. Lauds: as at present, with change of *Dominus vobiscum* as noted for private recitation.

iv. The rest of the Office continues as at present, with the exceptions already noted.

(b) Festive Office

This form of Office is used on First Class feasts and, in general, remains the same as our present Proper or "A" Office. However, the *lectio brevis* at Prime will *always* be of the season. For this reason several new seasonal lessons are furnished in the new code.

(c) Semifestive Office

This form is used on *Second Class* feasts and follows the same pattern we now observe for Doubles of the Second Class: proper Office for Matins, Lauds, Vespers; psalms of Little Hours from the *feria;* Sunday Compline.

(d) Ordinary Office

This form is used on *Third Class* feasts and in the Office of the B.V.M. on Saturdays:

i. Matins: antiphons, psalms, and verse are read as one Nocturn from the ferial Psalter unless, as on a few feasts (e.g. St. Martin, Nov. 11), proper Matins is indicated; the first and second lessons are from the occurring Scripture (the *second* is composed of the second *and* third lessons of the present breviary, with omission of the intervening responsory); the third lesson is the *contracta* on the life of the saint; *Te Deum.*

ii. Lauds and Vespers: as at present, with exceptions noted as regards the *Dominus vobiscum,* etc.

iii. Prime: as at present, except that the *lectio brevis* is of the *season* and not from the proper or common of the saint.

iv. The rest of the Office follows the present rubrics.

(e) Ferial Office

We shall use this Office on all ferias and vigils, except for the *Sacrum Triduum* and the vigil of Christmas. With the exceptions noted, it follows the present pattern of a ferial Office.

COMMEMORATIONS

For both the Mass and the Office there are two kinds of commemorations: privileged and ordinary. *Privileged* commemorations are made in Lauds and Vespers and in *all* Masses; *ordinary* commemorations are made *only* at Lauds, in conventual Masses, and in all *low* Masses.

(a) *Privileged* commemorations are commemorations:

(i) of a Sunday;
(ii) of a First Class liturgical day;
(iii) of the days within the octave of Christmas;
(iv) of the Ember Days in September;
(v) of the ferias of Advent, Lent and Passiontide;
(vi) of the Greater Litanies (at Mass).

(b) All other commemorations are *ordinary*.

A new treatment is given to the commemorations of St. Paul or St. Peter in the Mass and Office of St. Peter or St. Paul which further emphasizes the inseparability of the two orations.

In the *Office* of one of these Apostles, the oration of the other is added to the oration of the day, at Lauds and Vespers, *under a single conclusion* without the intervention of the antiphon and verse of the second.

In the *Mass* of one of them the oration of the other is added to the oration of the day *under a single conclusion.*

Whenever the oration of one of these Apostles is to be added, in the form of a commemoration in some other Mass or Office, the oration of the other Apostle is added immediately, before all other commemorations. The orations of St. Peter and St. Paul are always considered together as one.

The method of admitting commemorations is as follows:

(1) on First Class days and in non-conventual sung Masses, *no* commemoration is admitted, except for a single privileged one;

(2) on Second Class Sundays, *only one* commemoration is admitted, namely that of a Second Class feast; but this is omitted if a privileged commemoration has been made;

(3) on *other* Second Class days, *only one* commemoration is admitted, namely one privileged or one ordinary one;

(4) on third and Fourth Class days, *only two* commemorations are admitted.

VARIOUS OTHER CHANGES

1. Proper hymns, assigned to certain canonical hours, are never transferred. A hymn is always to be recited with the conclusion assigned to it in the breviary, without change for feast or season.

2. A commemorated Office never affects the doxology of the Office of the day.

3. Antiphons are *always* recited in their entirety before and after psalms and canticles. The asterisk merely shows how much is to be intoned.

4. At Friday's Vespers in paschaltide, the antiphon for the *Magnificat* is taken from Second Vespers of the preceding Sunday.

5. The second schema at Lauds is used as at present, but the displaced psalm is *not* transferred to Prime. On Sundays, when the second schema is used, the psalms at Prime will be 53; 118, i; and 118, ii. On Saturdays, the Canticle of Moses will end after the verse *"Petram, quae genuit te, neglexisti, et oblitus es Dei factoris tui"* (old psalter: *"Deum qui te genuit dereliquisti, et oblitus es Domini creatoris tui"*); this division drops three-fifths of the canticle.

6. At Prime the *capitulum* is always *Regi saeculorum.* And, as noted above, the *lectio brevis* at Prime will always be seasonal. The verse *Qui sedes* at Prime changes, as at present, when the feast or season has a proper verse, but it is not affected by a commemorated Office.

7. The litany, versicles, prayers, etc. are no longer of obligation on Rogation Days, for those who do not take part in the procession or special supplicatory ceremonies. They still bind on April 25.

8. As noted above, *Dominus vobiscum,* in private recitation, is always replaced by *Domine, exaudi;* if the latter has just been said, it is not repeated.

9. *Preces* continue as at present.

Such are the major changes in the Divine Office. We can only hope that this present reorganization of the abundant material in the new code may prove to be of some help in the adjustment to the new Ordo and new Office soon to confront us priests.

JOHN P. MCCORMICK, S.S.

Book Reviews

DE FIDELIUM ASSOCIATIONIBUS. By Seraphinus de Angelis. Napoli: M. d'Auria editore, 1959. 2 vols. Pp. xxxii + 342; xx + 493. $9.65 ($11.62, cloth bound).

The first volume of this work deals with the associations of the faithful in general, the secular institutes, and the third orders. The second volume deals with associations of the faithful in particular. Both volumes contain a well-detailed table of contents, an index of canons, an index of names, and a topical index, vast bibliographies (general and special), as well as painstaking appendices with pertinent documents of the Holy See and useful forms in Latin for the erection and aggregation of confraternities and pious unions.

As a commentary on the third part of the second book of the Code (canons 682-725) and on recent legislation on the associations of the faithful, Msgr. de Angelis' work is comprehensive, authoritative, and well presented. The author shows himself familiar with the practice of the Roman Curia—a result of his many years in the Sacred Congregation of the Council as consultor on questions concerning the associations of the faithful. He seems also to have digested all available literature on the subject—and he makes an intelligent and discriminating use of it. If here and there de Angelis' treatment of some modern associations (such as those of Catholic Action) appears to lack somewhat in clarity, this is understandable in view of the fact that it is hard to fit them, because of their character of modernity, into a canonical framework that is too rigid and traditional. In this regard one fervently hopes that the canonical view of these groups, so admirably suited to the demands of the associated life of the Church today, will be soon cast into new and more pliant juridical forms.

Besides its usefulness as a legal treatise, this publication is of immense practical value constituting, as it does, an almost complete directory of the associations presently existing in the Church. We have here an up-to-date description of some of the most important secular institutes—10 of pontifical law and 28 of diocesan approval. Likewise, de Angelis offers a list, with indication of their history and aims, of 43 societies that have requested the passage into secular institutes. An even more thorough treatment is reserved for the third orders (10). Finally, many confraternities, pious unions, sodalities, and groups of Catholic Action—for a total number of 142—are here examined and appraised.

A book such as this makes one deeply appreciative of the tremendous vitality of the lay people in the Church and increases one's gratitude to the Holy See for having constantly encouraged and guided the faithful in their bent and effort toward collective forms of spirituality, charity, and apostolate.

JOHN A. ABBO

NO LITTLE THING. By Elizabeth Ann Cooper. New York: Doubleday and Co., 1960. Pp. 360. $3.95.

BE NOT ANGRY. By William Michelfelder. New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1960. Pp. 238. $4.00.

There seems to be in the lay mind a strange fascination in the subject of a priest fallen from grace, accompanied at times by a singular incapacity to consider those factors which keep him from falling from grace. To the contemporary writer the "corruptio optimi" may not be the worst thing that can happen, but it is certainly most dramatic. *Labyrinthine Ways, The Garden of Allah, Il prète bello, Les clés de Saint Pierre* come to mind as works which have treated this theme with varying success. (As Henry Morton Robinson's cleric in *The Cardinal* just goes as far as exchanging first names with a contessa under a lemon tree, he certainly cannot qualify with the contemporary novel's full-fledged clerical libertines.)

Both of these new titles on the same unfortunate subject are taken from Thomas à Kempis, who might be conceivably disturbed at his words being used to label such unspiritual divagations onto the primrose path of dalliance.

Miss Cooper, though a graduate of what Mr. Michelfelder would probably consider a culturally isolated, smug, Catholic college for women, seems somehow to have found out enough about life to write a novel vastly superior to *Be Not Angry*.

In *No Little Thing*, a priest five years ordained sets about rescuing a young woman from suicide, and succumbs to sudden temptation after a series of indiscreet encounters. He abandons his priesthood when he learns that he is to be the father of the girl's child, contracts civil marriage, and becomes a self-tortured fugitive shepherd.

It is inevitable that Miss Cooper's work should be compared to that of Graham Greene, because not only does she write with tasteful sensitivity and skill, but her hero also is forced to use his priestly powers in granting absolution—in this case to a girl mortally injured in a

motor accident. The priest, Father Mundy, is brought to ponder the eternal character of his priesthood, and finds his way back.

A random example of Miss Cooper's skill is found in her description of the anguish of the faithful shepherd, Father Valerian, as he contemplates his unfortunate brother priest:

> Had it been he—each morning his hands would ache for want of union with Host and Chalice. He went to his knees again, straining. Wonder, and then shameless gratitude, because it was Michael Mundy and not he. He could have found joy in that gratitude were it not for the other's suffering. Because it did not occur to him that Mundy might not suffer, that he might, in fact, be content. . . . How did these Michael Mundys go on living, what kept them from following Judas all the way?

Be Not Angry, on the other hand, is not a commentary but a caricature. It is more preoccupied with rectory life, and the sub-theme of a renegade Catholic, who, when not engaged in drinking himself blind, robs poor boxes, and engages in grotesquely improbable conversations —usually by phone—with the parish staff. A real cleric's conversation with such a man would certainly be shorter, and conceivably less charitable.

Since Mr. Frank Sinatra provided inadvertent comedy some years ago by playing the role of a Father Paul in an incredibly bad film called *Miracle of the Bells,* this reviewer has not encountered more unreal examples of sheep in shepherd's clothing.

In Mr. Michelfelder's novel, Father Bowles, the hero (if one is not too exigent in the use of that word), goes off into the shadows to his paramour almost with the blessings of an addle-pated monsignor to whom love is all. The good monsignor, in a lengthy death-scene like something out of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle,* after saying all sorts of wise things, succumbs dramatically to what is described as "the claw," although the monsignor is supposed to have suffered a stroke rather than a coronary occlusion.

Meanwhile, Father Bowles hurries off to his paramour, and both realize that life from that moment on is not going to be any cup of tea, but as long as they have each other . . . etc.

Before all this takes place, we are treated to a pastiche of rectory life, quotations from Father Bowles sodality sermons that sound like an infelicitous blending of Edgar Guest and Norman Vincent Peale ("Human love is often snatched from us like a flower torn from the fingers by a gust of wind.").

This reviewer is not suggesting that priests be presented as "Going My Way" extroverts who can do anything ten times better than any-

body else. J. F. Powers, for instance, whose priests are from that most arch of dioceses, the *New Yorker,* writes often of clerics, not profoundly spiritual, but recognizable.

The basic inadequacy of this novel is not that the author sees love as the only truth, but that he sees love in a one-dimensional image that blurs the love-inspired dedication of priestly celibacy.

As a cleric rather bored by this theme of priestly sin, however artfully presented, this reviewer would like to address a few remarks to those eager and yet unknown novelists who are busily going through the *Imitation* in search of a good title for tomorrow's version of sacerdotal delinquency.

First of all, novelists, TV or scenario writers should solemnly swear to avoid the expression "My son" or any of its variant forms as a prelude to sage advice given by their fictitious clerics. Many of us exude neither sufficient benignity nor age to feel anything but silly in such a patronizing approach; we try to talk to people, not descend upon them from Olympus, as if seriousness were directly proportionate to our solemnity.

Further, the priest, though he lives alone, is not inevitably lonely in his priesthood, as Mr. Michelfelder's monsignor suggests; he is a priest because he desires to be, and because in the Providence of God that desire has been ratified by a bishop.

The priest sees sacrifice, not as a unique and unnatural burden asked of him alone, but as a dimension of human life; and he finds happiness in his dedication, as his brother finds happiness in the world in the great sacrifices he makes for family and goods.

However disappointing it may be to the "sex-is-the-only-truth" school of writing, the priest is probably worried about a busy life's infringement of his mental prayer and occasional lapses in charity, rather than distracted by a bejewelled Thaïs or an apple-cheeked sodality girl.

Living in a world of trivialities, the priest meets people at the most solemn moments of their lives, and walks always in the light of a God-given priesthood. And he sees his priesthood, despite his many inadequacies, as a life rich beyond measure. He may not feel the fevers nor the ecstasies of the world's loves, but he knows in his heart of hearts that the Lord who has promised him the hundredfold *and* eternal life will not be wanting to him either in this life or the next.

ROBERT PAUL MOHAN, S.S.

Books Received

THE MIND OF AN ARCHBISHOP: A Study of Man in the Writings of The Most Reverend Karl J. Alter, D.D., LL.D. Edited by Maurice E. Reardon, S.T.D. Published by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Distributed by St. Anthony's Guild, Paterson, N. J. 1960. Pp. xix + 426. $6.00.

MEDITATIONS ON THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Gaston Brillet, C.Or. Translated by Jane Wynne Saul, R.S.C.J. New York: Desclee Co., Inc., 1960. Pp. 243. $3.50.

BASIC LOGIC: The Fundamental Principles of Formal Deductive Reasoning. By Raymond J. McCall. New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1960. Pp. xxvi + 235. $1.25.

SIDDUR: THE TRADITIONAL PRAYERBOOK FOR SABBATH AND FESTIVALS. Edited and translated by David De Sola Pool. New York: University Books, Inc., 1960. Pp. xvi + 879. $17.50.

THE RELIGIOUS PROBLEM OF REFUGEES IN U.S.A. By Jan Piekoszewski. London, Canada: Veritas Foundation Publication Centre, 1960. Pp. v + 128. $2.75.

THE MONKS OF QUMRAN: THE PEOPLE OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS. By Edmund F. Sutcliffe, S.J. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1960. Pp. xvi + 272. $5.50.

THE SUFFERINGS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. By Father Thomas of Jesus. Edited by Edward Gallagher. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1960. Pp. xvi + 584. $5.75.

PREVIEWS AND PRACTICAL CASES OF MARRIAGE. Vol. I: Preliminaries and Impediments. By Owen W. Cloean, S.J. Milwaukee: Bruce, 1960. Pp. xii + 403. $8.50.

FREQUENT CONFESSION. By Benedict Baur. Translated by Patrick C. Barry, S.J. New York: Society of St. Paul, 1960. Pp. 217. $3.00.

RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION IN THE PHILIPPINES: The Life and Death of Gregorio Aglipay, 1860-1960. Vol. I: 1860-1940. By Pedro S. de Achutegui, S.J. and Miguel A. Bernad, S.J. Manila: Ateneo de Manila, 1960. Pp. xvi + 580. Cloth $15.00; Paper $8.00.

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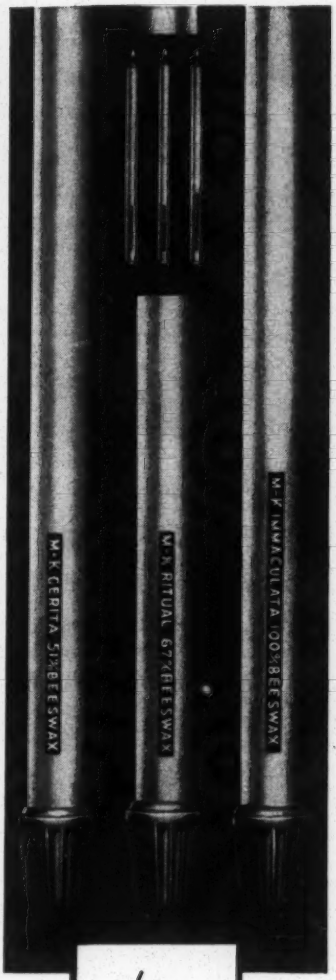

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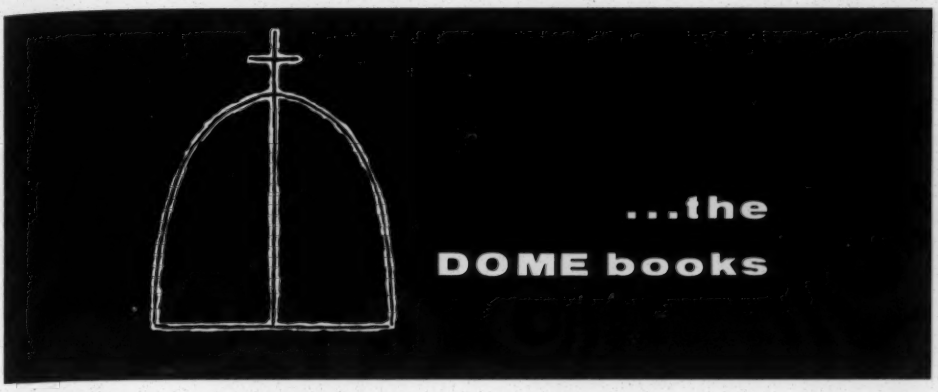

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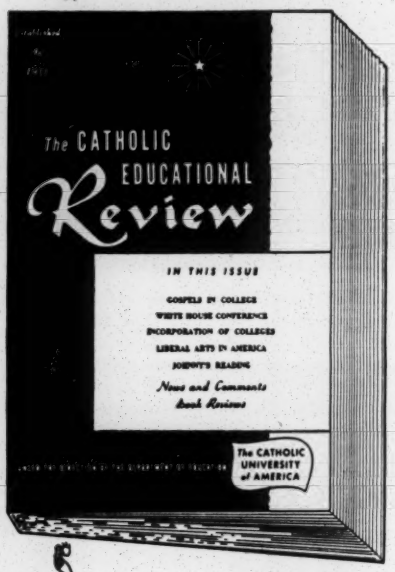

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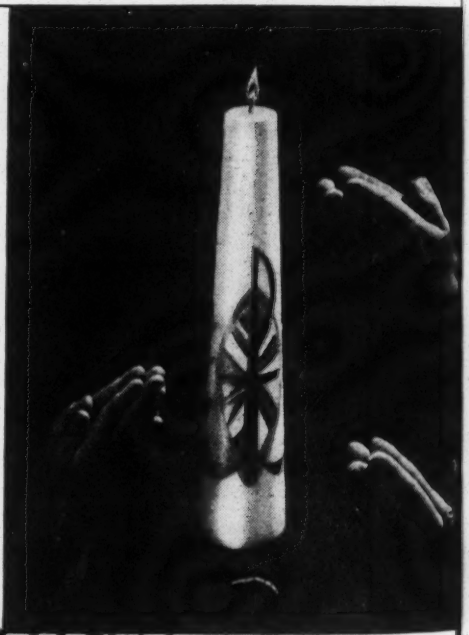

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